

# The Christian Priesthood



**1 Peter 2:9**

# The Christian Priesthood

- The New Testament makes it very clear that Christians are in a special relationship to God.
- Christians are often viewed as, and called, **God's children** in that a new birth is required for a spiritual union with the Creator (**John 3:2-5; Galatians 3:26-27**)

# The Christian Priesthood

*“Come out from among them And be separate,  
says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean,  
And I will receive you. I will be a Father to you,  
And you shall be My sons and daughters,  
Says the LORD Almighty.”*

**~ 2 Corinthians 6:17-18**

*(Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 20:34,41; 2 Samuel 7:14)*

# The Christian Priesthood

- Furthermore we see in the New Testament that because of Jesus' incarnation (John 1:14) that we have entered into kindred relationship with Him.
- We are therefore His brethren, **and He is proud of that fact!**

# The Christian Priesthood

For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified *are* all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: *“I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”*

**~ Hebrews 2:11-12 (Psalm 22:22)**

# The Christian Priesthood

And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, “Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.

**~ Matthew 12:49-50**

# The Christian Priesthood

- In addition to being called God's Children, and Christ's brethren we are designated by another name.
- A name that is not so commonly used or even understood for that matter.
- As Christ's brethren and God's children Christians are also designated as **Priests**.

# The Christian Priesthood

- In order to understand this, and the context in which we see it used in the New Testament we must understand three things:
  1. The Old Testament Priesthood
  2. The New Testament Priesthood
  3. Christians Are Priests.



# The Old Testament Priesthood



# The Christian Priesthood

- Whether literal or figurative the Hebrew word Priest (**KOHEN**) is found approximately **750 times** in the Old Testament.
- The word Priest may best be defined as *“One who approaches God (or gods in paganism) on behalf of others.”* ***It literally signifies one who stands before God as a representative of the people and one stands before the people as a representative of God.***
- *In the Old Testament this was an official position.*

# The Christian Priesthood

- The Priests would perform sacrificial and worship duties.
- Even before the Law of Moses we find Godly priests as far back as Melchizedek.
- We learn that this man was a priest and a king.

# The Christian Priesthood

Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he *was* the priest of God Most High.

~ **Genesis 14:18**

# The Christian Priesthood

- Most of the nations that God asked the Israelites to destroy or stay away from had copied the idea of priesthood.
- Priests of Dagon (**1 Samuel 5:1-5**)
- Philistine priests and diviners (**1 Samuel 6:1-6**)
- Prophets and Priests of Baal (**2 Kings 10:19; 2 Chronicles 34:4-5**)

# The Christian Priesthood

- In Israel the High priest would enter the Holy of Holies and make sin offerings for the people to roll their sins forward for an entire year (Leviticus 4:3-35; Hebrews 13:11).
- The concept of a priest in the Old Testament is important because it highlights the fact that there is a superior being, Creator, and God over humanity.

# The Christian Priesthood

- Yet also suggests that we as human beings are inferior to that God and needs a mediator to make intercession for us. In the Old Testament this was the High Priest.

**“While a study of the Old Testament Levitical priesthood is fascinating, the most important element of that system is the typical nature of it, as it foreshadowed the greater priesthood of the New Testament regime.”**

**~ Wayne Jackson**



# The New Testament Priesthood





# The Christian Priesthood

- While we are introduced the concept of priesthood in the Old Testament, the Law of Moses was designed by God to be temporary, and preparing people for the coming of Christ.
- The priesthood was a shadow of THE HIGH PRIEST and Messiah who stood behind it, it was the prelude to Christianity and Christ's Church.

# The Christian Priesthood

Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

~ **Galatians 3:24-28**

# The Christian Priesthood

- This is the major theme of the Book of Hebrews.

*For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.*

~ Hebrews 7:12

# The Christian Priesthood

- The contained elements of prophecy that could only find their fulfillment once the Church was established.

*So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

**~ Colossians 2:16-17**

# The Christian Priesthood

Therefore *it was* necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, *which are* copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

~ **Hebrews 9:23-24**

# The Christian Priesthood

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

~ **Hebrews 10:1**

# The Christian Priesthood

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

~ John 5:39-40

# The Christian Priesthood

Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer both **gifts and sacrifices**. Therefore *it is* necessary that this One also have something to offer.

~ Hebrews 8:1-3



# The Christian Priesthood

But The Gift of God is eternal life through Christ  
Jesus Our Lord.

~ **Romans 6:23**

How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who  
through the eternal Spirit offered Himself  
without spot to God.

~ **Hebrews 9:14**

# The Christian Priesthood

- Is Christ our High Priest?

*Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful **High Priest** in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*

~ Hebrews 2:17

# The Christian Priesthood

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and **High Priest** of our confession, Christ Jesus,

~ Hebrews 3:1

# The Christian Priesthood

Seeing then that we have a great **High Priest** who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. For we do not have a **High Priest** who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin.

~ **Hebrews 4:14-15**

# The Christian Priesthood

Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a **High Priest**, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.

~ Hebrews 8:1

# The Levitical Priesthood

Forerunner of Things to Come

# GOD

The Most Holy  
Place

**(Hebrews 9:7) The High Priest**



The Priests

# The Christian Priesthood

**GOD**

**Heaven**

**Jesus Christ** (Colossians 3:1)



Christians (Romans 8:34)

# Are Christians Priests?





# The Christian Priesthood

- Consider again the connection between the Old Testament and the New Testament:
  1. Born into the priesthood (**Exodus 28:1; John 3:3-5**). When you become a Christian you are born into the Royal Priest hood:

# The Christian Priesthood

But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

~ Peter 2:9

# The Christian Priesthood

2. Priests served in the temple (**Deuteronomy 23:18**). Christians are members of the body of Christ, and thus are a spiritual temple.

*Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

**1 Corinthians 3:16**

# The Christian Priesthood

You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

~ **1 Peter 2:5**

# The Christian Priesthood

3. The Priests under the Old Law were subservient to the High Priest (**Exodus 28**). We as Christians serve under Jesus Christ our King and High Priest (**Ephesians 1:20-23**)
4. Priests under the Old Law had to offer sacrifices to God. As Priests today we offer our very heart, body, soul, and mind as a sacrifice to God.

# The Christian Priesthood

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a **living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

~ **Romans 12:1-2**

# The Christian Priesthood

- How though, do we actually serve as priests?

If we remember that the role of a priest is to represent God before the people and the people before God then it becomes clear how every Christian serves as a priest.

# The Christian Priesthood

- Before the People

- We Let Our Light Shine So That God May Be seen (**Matthew 5:16**)
- We Should Do Good To All (**Galatians 6:10**)
- Be Knowledgeable in the Word (**1 Peter 3:15**)



# The Christian Priesthood

- **Before God**

- Pray For Our Enemies (**Matthew 5:44**)
- Pray For Ourselves (**Matthew 7:7; 1 Peter 5:7, Acts 8:22**)
- Give the Best We Have to God Everyday (**Mark 12:42-44**)

# The Christian Priesthood

- Today Our Savior and King is our High Priest who sacrificed Himself, sits in Heaven the most Holy Place, and makes intercession for His people.
- We by our birth into His Kingdom and Church through Baptism have become priests, the fulfillment of the shadows of the Old Testament brought into the Light of Christ.

# **This Morning Let The High Priest Take Your Sins Before God**

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

~ Romans 6:4

**And Become a member of the Royal Priesthood**