

Baptist Distinctives: The Priesthood of the Believer

Introduction: We Have Privilege and Responsibility

1. Citizens of a Kingdom – Regenerate/Born Again
2. Servants of God, The Bride of Christ – The Church
3. A Royal Priesthood (**1 Pet 2:9**) – Kingly Priests of God

The Main Idea: The Priesthood of all Believers means every believer is a priest of God, with access to God through our Great High Priest Jesus, serving God, making spiritual sacrifices, and able to help the church find God's direction in ministering to one another and then to the world.

The Old Testament Priesthood: Defining a Biblical Priest

1. Israel was to be a Kingdom of Priests (**Ex 19:5-6**)
2. *What is a Priest?*
 - a. Brings people into the presence of God
 - b. Represents God to Others
 - c. Mediates between God and Man
 - d. Speaks to God on Other's behalf
 - e. Makes Sacrifices to God for Others
3. The Lineage of Aaron, The Tribe of Levi (**Ex 28:1-4**)
 - a. Took care of Priestly duties IN the Tabernacle
4. The High Priest and the Day of Atonement (**Lev 16**)
 - a. The Holy of Holies
 - i. Inner Sanctum Separated by a Large/Thick Veil
 - ii. Only the High Priest could enter the Holy Place
 - iii. The Ark of the Covenant
 - a. Two Cherubim symbolizing Judgment
 - b. One Mercy Seat – Grace
 - b. The Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*)
 - i. High Priest changed into Sacrificial Linens
 - ii. High Priest Sacrificed the Bull for Himself
 - iii. Two Goats Brought to the High Priest: A Sacrificial Goat and Scapegoat
 - iv. Sacrificial Goat sacrificed for Israel's sins
 - v. High Priest lays hands on the Scapegoat & has all the sins of the nation transferred to it
 - vi. Scapegoat is led out of the camp into the wilderness to be set free (*Azazel*)
5. The Old Testament (sinful) priests served, prayed, made sacrifices, worked as a mediator between God & Man

Jesus, Our Great High Priest

1. Jesus came in Common, "Sacrificial" Clothes
2. Jesus prepares for the Atonement by perfect Obedience
3. Jesus needs no sacrifice for Himself – He is sinless
4. Jesus is the Great High Priest representing God the Father to God's People
5. Jesus is the Sacrificial Goat who is a Substitute for any who would believe – He sheds His blood on the Cross
6. Jesus died on the Cross – the Veil was Torn in Two!
7. Jesus is the Scapegoat – The sin of the believer is imputed to Christ (transferred to Him)
8. Our SIN is separated as far as the East is from the West
9. Jesus is Our Mediator! (**1 Tim 2:5**)
10. Jesus finished the Work He Came to Complete (**Heb 10**)
11. Jesus' sacrifice is once for all time (**Heb 7, Rom 8**)

Why Is This Important? Christians Are United To Christ

1. The Reformation: The Priesthood of Believers
 - a. Challenged Rome and the Religious Caste System
 - i. The Clergy vs. The Laity – Sharp Divide
 - ii. Rome preached a blind faith to the laity
 - b. Luther: Christ is Prophet, Priest and King – to be saved is to be united to Him and ALL of His offices
 - c. Jesus is a Priest = You are in Him, therefore a Priest
 - d. Roman Priesthood – Ordained to Bless the Eucharist & Stands between God and Man (Luther Criticized)
 - e. Your Vocation (Latin: *Calling*)
 - i. The Line between Clergy and Laity, Secular and Sacred was Shattered (Worship w/ all of life)
 - ii. Homemakers, smiths, farmers just as important in the worship of God as Church Leadership

Implications Of The Priesthood Of All Believers

1. Jesus is Our Mediator – Our Priest (Not the Pastor)
2. We Are The Temple of the Spirit
3. We Have Access to God
4. We Offer Sacrifices to God: Our Bodies, Evangelism, Love to One another, Giving, Encouragement, Life & Death, Prayer – Supplication & Intercession
5. For Baptists, this is a Strong Position for Congregational Church Government
 - a. Holy Spirit's Indwelling the Regenerate Church
 - b. Spiritual Wisdom to Conduct the Church's Affairs