

## PRIESTS OF GOD #1

A. **Members of the Lord's church** bear a designation that is most honorable.

1. The Father has given His children the title of Priest; collectively the church is a priesthood.
2. Hebrew: Kohen (ko-hane'): *a principle officer, a chief ruler* (cf. 2 Tim 2:12; Rev 20:7; 3:21).
3. Greek: Hierous (hee-er-yooce'): *one who offers sacrifices & has the charge of things pertaining thereto* (cf. Rom 12:1; Heb 13:14-16).

B. **The promise** of this name was made over 700 years before it was actually given.

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Isa 61:6 (Discuss 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19) – But **you shall be named the priests of the LORD**, they shall call you the servants of our God.

1 Pet 2:5, 9 – **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...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;

Rev 1:5-6 – Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, & the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us & washed us from our sins in His own blood, **6 & has made us kings & priests [a kingdom of priests] to His God & Father**, to Him be glory & dominion forever & ever. Amen (Rev 5:10; 20:6).

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1. So no longer is just a small segment among God's people authorized to minister to the LORD.
2. Today every Christian is a minister in the Temple of God where His presence resides (1 Cor 3:16).
3. But knowing that fact doesn't always affect Christians in the way it should.
  - a. Do we present our bodies a living sacrifice?
  - b. Do we continually offer the sacrifice of praise?
  - c. Do we proclaim the praises of Him?

{Discuss the saying, "He sings his/her praises."}

[In this first of two lessons, we want to look at what a person **must BE** To serve the God as His priest.]

## I. TO BE GOD'S PRIEST ONE MUST BE...

### A. Chosen & Called.

1. In the OT, to be a priest of God one had to be born into the right family; the LORD chose Aaron's sons to be priests ([Exo 28-29](#)).
  - a. The LORD may have done that for many reasons, but the reason that is of chief importance to us, is to show us...
2. To be a priest of God today one must be born into the right family; God has chosen those who are in Christ to be His sons & daughters.

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**John 1:12-13** – But **AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM [Jesus Christ], to them He gave the right to become children of God**, to those who believe in His name: 13 **who were born**, not of blood, nor **of the will** of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God**. ([John 3:3, 5](#); [Gal 3:26-27](#))

**2 Thess 2:13-14** – ...**God from the beginning chose you for salvation** through sanctification by the Spirit & belief in the truth, 14 **to which He called you by our gospel**, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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3. The priesthood of God has never been based on ones' *education, ability, or achievement*, but by **God's** choice.

4. God chooses His priests, not from the *wealthy, wise & powerful*, but from those who receive His Son

[Jesus is the High Priest ([Heb 3:1; 4:14](#)) & only those in the family of the High Priest can serve as priests.

The Father has reserved the privilege of being a priest to those who are born into His family by receiving His Son in obedient faith ([Rom 1:5, 16](#)).

Secondly, to be a priest of God today, one must be...]

### B. Purified & Sanctified.

1. The OT priests had to follow complicated rituals to be purified (cleansed) & sanctified (consecrated) for their service to God, & invariably, those rituals involved water, animal blood & oil ([Exo 29](#)).

2. But today, a single act of faith will purify & sanctify one for service to God as a Priest.

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**Acts 22:16** – And now why are you waiting? *Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*

**1 Cor 6:11** – ...you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus & by the Spirit of our God.

**Rev 1:5** – Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. *To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, (Heb 9:13-14; Acts 2:38).*

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- a. Even though water is present & necessary when one is purified from sins, it is actually the blood of Jesus Christ that makes purification possible.

- b. But after one's purification from sin, the sanctifying work begins ([2 Cor 6:14-7:1](#)).

- 1) Paul used three quotes from OT Scripture to show that after (baptism) purification, Christians must put forth a great effort to remain sanctified.

- 2) Why is sanctification so important to us? Because we must be completely sanctified when Jesus comes again, or we cannot go with Him to Heaven.

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**1 Thess 5:23** – Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; & may your whole spirit, soul, & body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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3. When the OT priests fulfilled their orders at the Temple, they were “off duty”.

4. But NT priests must keep themselves purified & sanctified at all times.

[A NT priest should never do anything that would affect the quality of his spiritual sacrifices to God.

So being a priest of God requires that we be purified from all sin, & then sanctified for the purposes of God.

Thirdly, to be a priest of God today, one must be...]

### C. Satisfied With The Portion God Gives.

1. OT priests were given very few things but they were promised the very best portion of life.

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**Num 18:20** – The LORD said to Aaron: “**You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion & your inheritance** among the children of Israel.”

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- a. This meant God would supply every need.
- b. An OT priest had little time for land holdings, or business ventures, so the LORD fed the priests with a portion of the sacrifices Israel made to the Him.
- c. A faithful priest, who attended his duties, would never go hungry & never be in want.
- d. It sounds like there might be a lesson in that for God’s priests (Christians) today. There is!

2. Those who are in the priesthood of Christ, who seek the kingdom of God first & His righteousness (**Matt 6:33**), who set their minds on things above & not on things on the earth (**Col 3:2**), will have every need supplied – to allow them to continue in their service to God as priests.

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**Phil 4:19** (Discuss **4:18**) – And my **God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus**.

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**1 Tim 6:6-8, 11-12** – Now godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, & it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And **having food & clothing, with these we shall be content**....11 But you, O man of God, **flee these things** [the love of money] & pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. 12 **Fight the good fight of faith**, lay hold on eternal life [instead of worldly possessions & honor].

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3. Christians are priests in a land that is not their home—we are pilgrims & sojourners.
  - a. But that doesn’t mean we don’t have a home; that doesn’t mean we aren’t rich.
  - b. We have the most satisfying portion of all: God is our portion, & His inheritance belongs to us because we belong to His Son.

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**1 Pet 1:3-4** – Blessed be the **God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**, who **according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in HEAVEN for you**, **5** who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

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4. When Israel camped around the Tabernacle, the priests lived directly in front of it, near the visible presence of God—how could they NOT be satisfied with that portion?

5. The faithful Christian has a similar view, but a spiritual view seen with the eye of faith.

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**Eph 2:4-7** – But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, **5** even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), **6 & raised us up together, & made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus**, **7** that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

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## CLOSING

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All of Ron's children had grown up & left home. **One** disadvantage to this was that now Ron had to rake the leaves in his yard. **While** he was busy doing this his 8-year old next-door neighbor, Samantha, came over & said she wanted to help. **So** she helped Mr. Ron rake & bag the leaves—and then she said, "Anytime I hear you raking, I'm going to come over & help." **Ron** began to look for angel wings on Samantha when she said to him, "My name means *"someone who helps"*. **So** I'm helping!" **Samantha** was trying her best to live up to her name.

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A. **Are we living up to our name** Priests.

1. Present our bodies a living sacrifice?
2. Continually offer the sacrifice of praise?
3. Proclaim the praises of Him?

B. **Since the NT priesthood** is made up of Christians, then whatever it takes to be a Christian will also make on a priest to God.

1. You must be called by the gospel, which requires that you must listen to the gospel, believe & obey it (**Acts 2**)
2. When you are baptized into the death of Christ you will then be purified & sanctified by the BLOOD of Jesus Christ (**Rom 6:3-4**).
3. You must then be satisfied with your portion of the inheritance in Heaven, & not desire to look back to the land you left (**Luke 9:62; Heb 11:8-16**).