



THE PRIESTHOOD AND CULTURE PART 1

3.3.2024 - Pastor Gerald Murphy

Review

PART 1- The Priesthood and The Great High Priest - “There is no priesthood without the Great High Priest”

- **Revelation - Receive - Respond**

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.

PART II - The Priesthood and Worship - “He is worthy of our entire lives”

- **Our worship must be fueled by our testimony.**

1 Peter 2:9 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.

- **Through the 7 expressions/postures of praise (seven Hebrew words for praise) we can continue to give the Lord everything He deserves in our rhythms of worship.**

The Law of Burnt Offerings states in Lev. 6:13 A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out! Now the sacrifice is praise, the fruit of our lips. It reminds me of what Paul says in 1 Thess 5:16-18, rejoice always, prayer without ceasing, in everything give thanks for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus!

PART III - The Priesthood and Culture - “Carrying the presence of the Lord outside of the temple”

The Lord rescued His people to make them a priesthood

Exodus 19:5-6 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a **special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6** And you shall be to Me a **kingdom of priests** and a **holy nation.**' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

- He called a people who were former slaves, the weakest, most insignificant people, a special treasure to Himself! He personally stretched out His hand and rescued them from idols and the government of Egypt. God doesn't just proclaim Israel's purpose as a Kingdom of Priests but their identity: special treasure, and a holy nation
- **A priesthood that would represent God, His government, and culture (holy) on earth, while standing before God on behalf of the people and the earth!**
- God declares Israel's purpose as a Kingdom of Priests before the tabernacle of Moses, the tabernacle of David and Solomon's temple were built.

He didn't call the buildings a special treasure, but the people! It's the people and God's presence together that gave the tabernacle and the temple their value not the other way around!

- In God's promise and purpose to Israel He always had the nations in mind!
 - He said you will be a special treasure to Me above all people, for **(because)** all the earth is Mine.

Genesis 11 is the downfall of the nations, the pride, evil, and unity of the people reached a climax that God had to disrupt, divide and disperse the nations. This is a sad moment in human history but it wasn't over, God had a plan! What was the beginning of that plan, it was making a covenant with a man named Abraham who would give birth to a family that would become the nation of Israel, but even this was with the nations in mind! God's covenant with and commitment to Israel has always been unto the restoration and redemption of all peoples, all nations, every language, tribe and tongue and that is now possible through Jesus Christ who bled and died for Jew and Gentile alike! Through Jesus alone is salvation and reconciliation with the Father available!

- The only condition to Israel walking in her purpose was OBEDIENCE

From the place of intimacy alone God's dominion expands

Gen. 1:26-28 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over [\[a\]](#)all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." **27** So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him;

male and female He created them. **28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that lmoves on the earth."**

Gen. 2:8 The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.

The first temple didn't have walls! It was marked by God's presence and pleasure in intimate fellowship with Adam and Eve and everything they needed as the first priests to carry God's presence and dominion throughout the rest of creation was found in that place!

Moses' leadership reflected this pattern. From the place of His tabernacle, intimately encountering God, everything he needed to lead the people, and the nation of Israel was found. He carried the presence of God outside of the tabernacle to guide the people into God's will heart!

Exodus 33:11 So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.

PRIVATE INTIMACY LEADS TO PUBLIC IMPACT

IF WE PRIORITIZE INFLUENCE BEFORE GOD WE WON'T EVER HAVE TO MANIPULATE
HAVING INFLUENCE BEFORE PEOPLE

In the Old Testament we see that the priests had influence within the city, holding leadership roles in many different spheres.

- **The influence of the priesthood (in cities and culture)**
 - · Judges
 - **2 Chronicles 19:8-10**
 - **1 Chronicles 26:29** · Gatekeepers
 - **1 Chronicles 26:12-19 (includes gate keepers of the city 2 Kings 7:10)**
 - · Teachers
 - **2 Chronicles 17:7-9**

8 the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests. 9 So they taught in Judah, and *had* the Book of the Law of the LORD with them; they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people.

- · Treasures
 - **1 Chronicles 26:20-25**
- · Officials
 - **1 Chronicles 26:30-32**

30 Of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, one thousand seven hundred able men, had the oversight of Israel on the west side of the Jordan for all the business of the LORD, and in the service of the king

32 And his brethren *were* two thousand seven hundred able men, heads of fathers' *houses*, whom King David made officials over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God and the affairs of the king.

- · Placed in the cities of each Tribe
 - **Numbers 35:1-8**

Moses gives instructions for Israel to ensure that the Levites were given 48 cities as they entered into the land that God had promised them. Joshua completes this assignment after the conquest of the land.

Joshua 21:41 All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel *were* forty-eight cities with their common-lands.

vs. 44 The LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand.

Israel's priestly ministry in temple was always connected to God's heart for the nations

Isaiah 56:6-7 "Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, And to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants— Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant— 7 Even them I will bring to My holy mountain,

And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *Will be* accepted on My altar;

For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."

"God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him." - John Piper

"The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." - Westminster Catechism

In Israel's hour of darkness as a result of their own idolatry, disobedience and sin, Isaiah warns them about their punishment and exile, but his book closes with promises of restoration and Israel's comfort in Isaiah 40-55. Then in chapter 56 Isaiah attention shifts to the salvation of the foreign nations and the inclusion of the gentiles in the priesthood! He says there is a day coming when even these foreign nations who taught you to worship false gods and practice wickedness, even them I am going to make a special treasure before Me, even they will be a part of the holy nation and kingdom of priests I rescued you to be!

Ephesians 2:12-16 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. **13** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, **15** by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, **16** and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

More than ever we must commit to getting our perspective from sitting before the Lord as we sit in our position as a priesthood. Ask yourself what is the dominant influence of your heart, your emotions, what you get from the news or what you get from God's word and from spending time with Him. Your family, your co-workers, your classmates, your neighbors need to be touched by the presence of God that you carry! They need hope that only comes from knowing God through Jesus and being convinced of His goodness!

Remember Genesis 11 and 12! God divided the nations and enacted a redemption strategy through a covenant with Abraham that would birth a family, that would become a nation that God rescued to make them a priesthood but all with the nations in mind!!

On this side of the cross and resurrection we can now walk out the mandate we've been given specifically as Gentile nations to restore the tabernacle of David. To restore the place for God's people to encounter God's presence and lift up agreement through prayers and praise that we might carry His presence, and expand His Kingdom beyond the temple!

- **Amos 9:11-12/Acts 15:16-17**

God wants His priesthood to fall in love with His commitment to the Garden Eden and live among the people carrying that vision in their hearts

Every time the Priests went into the temple they were reminded of God's heart for the Garden of Eden!

1 Kings 6:32 The two doors *were of* olive wood; and he carved on them figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid *them* with gold; and he spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees.

The presence of God in the temple is a river meant to bring life outside of the temple

Just like there were four rivers that flowed from the Garden of Eden, Ezekiel had a vision of the new and restored temple after Israel's fall that included a river leaving the temple bringing life to the land around it!

Ezekiel 47:1, 8-9 Then he brought me back to the door of the ^atemple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar.

8 Then he said to me: "This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the ^bvalley, and enters the sea. *When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed.* **9** And it shall be *that* every living thing that moves, wherever ^cthe rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes.

Jesus is our greatest example of carrying and releasing the presence of God into the world

John 7:37-38 On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. **38** He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacle) among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Church was birthed as result of taking what was experienced inside the walls of the upper room beyond the walls to the city of Jerusalem and beyond

Acts 2:1-4 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all ^awith one accord in one place. **2** And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** Then there appeared to them ^bdivided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. **4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The Church of Antioch shows us that ministry to the Lord leads to assignments, missions, and impact in the world around us!

Acts 13:1-3 Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. **2** As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." **3** Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.

It is those who minister to the Lord that God wants to give meaningful influence in the culture

There is weight on the weeping of the priests who minister to the Lord

Joel 2:17 Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say, "Spare Your people, O LORD, And do not give Your heritage to reproach, That the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where *is* their God?' "

When we minister to Him in His presence we hear what He is saying from the throne room and we see what He is promising to do. We become priests of a clear and heavenly perspective offering hope to the world!

Revelation 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God.

God is raising up a people, a family and a priesthood who will make His throne room their Home! John 17:24

Reflection questions

Are you convinced that God wants to bless those around you from the overflow of your intimacy with Him?

Is there a place for the presence of God and agreement with God where He's given you influence? If you are there the answer should be YES

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Do you need grace to prioritize ministry to the Lord? Ask Him now

Are you engaging your world with a heart that longs for the Garden of Eden to be restored?

How is the Lord inviting you to respond? What will you do/change this week as a result!?

Altar

- Hungry for intimacy
- Vision to see God's presence impact your spheres of influence