

# Baptized into a Royal Priesthood

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 03 March 2024

Preacher: Jon Moffitt

[ 0 : 0 0 ]    you're listening to the sermon podcast of grace reforms church in spring hill tennessee to learn more about us visit our website at [grace.reformed.org](http://grace.reformed.org) and now today's sermon it's a pure joy to be one of the elders that serve you church and to be the primary preaching and teaching pastor i have truly enjoyed my time this week meeting with several of you whether it be through men's group or through lunches appointments but also spending my time preparing my mind and my heart to present god's word to us today this truth resonated with me as i was preparing peter's letter the romans 11 33 he says oh the depths of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of god how unsearchable are his judgments and inscrutable his ways you'll never reach the depths of the wonder of god's word what a book what a book in other words it never gets dust on our shelves because it never loses its value at times during the study of god's word fresh insights from the text can profoundly influence our perception of not only scripture but of life and today happens to be one of those occasions for me and i pray it's the same for you not that it's new to christiandom but it's just fresh and exciting for us to seek and see everything that god has for us this week i've observed a noticeable shift not only in my own spiritual understanding and the mental state that i have but there's a really an enthusiastic excitement about sharing christ from all of scripture specifically how peter is proclaiming who he is to us and what that means for us as you've already read in scripture how this changes our actions in the way in which we uh obey and so today we plan on really delving deeper into these uh truths that peter has but we're going to have to really condense it down into a smaller section i asked several of you this week are you in a hurry to get through first peter because if you are i need to encourage you to slow down we have lots to cover so we're going to just cover a few verses if not even a few words today to make sure that we walk away filled with all that peter has when we encounter parts of the text that we struggle to understand which there's a few ahead of us we may inadvertently impose our own interpretations or dismiss them as being just insignificant we can think it's easy as you read certain words if they were truly important i would understand them easily it would just be straightforward but that's not true paul even says that the mystery of christ was hidden for a reason and it's being revealed now so not everything in scripture is always as clear it takes work it requires work which is what we're going to do this morning we're going to examine peter's concept of a living stone something that we may have just passed over in our reading in our study but we cannot do it anymore because we're going to miss the symbolizing of the royal priesthood which is kind of the the foundation of this epistle what he's pushing us towards enduring uh hardship while we do the work of the kingdom in the upcoming chapters i think failing to grasp peter's metaphor or imagery could cause us to overlook the significance in our own life and why we can easily fall prey and fall back into the traps of our old sins which is why peter keeps saying put them away by the way this is a really good rule of

thumb when you're hearing preaching or listening to god's word or reading it the bible rarely i mean um i'll say it with confidence the bible never tells you not to do something that you could possibly do right so it doesn't say uh don't fly it knows we cannot fly but it says don't sin because we can sin don't be envious and and hateful don't love other gods all of this is because we have the capacity to do that therefore what in what power do we fight against these urges and then not only what power what's the purpose of our life this is what peter is talking about he's talking about your former life and how you've put it away we've already covered that and now he gives you the purpose of your life he says you're a living stone you're a ruling priesthood here's the problem what what does that mean what's the metaphor right what's the picture behind it you know if i were to use an illustration talking about it you know sometimes our children they're like a bowl in a china shop everyone's like yeah kind of got that picture right we know what a bowl is we know the china shop is not a good mixture right but when he says a royal priesthood a stone a living stone what does that mean so we're gonna go into the old testament we're gonna mine out of this really what the almost the entirety of the old testament functions around which is priests so let's just start with the definition what is a priest it's not a word we necessarily use unless you come from a roman catholic background but the word priest is it's actually a general concept it's not just a biblical concept it's something historically that existed even outside of israel outside of the people of god and the bible even referenced priests that serve other gods in the bible so the title priest can come with this understanding of of this is what the definition that i wrote down it's someone who is an intermarry between the divine and the human community leading worship services offering prayers administering sacraments or rituals providing spiritual guidance and counseling and often acting as representative of faith to the community to the broader society around them to the world and so the the priest's primary job to sum it up was to is the connection between the divine and the rest of humanity it could be of uh god or other gods this is why there are other priests in the bible now this idea of priest is prominent in the old testament this is why peter can just say you're royal priesthood without explanation because he's assuming you've read the first part remember it's not old testament it's the first part of your bible the foundation part we often jump to the second part of our bible without looking at the first part and we don't understand what's going on the old testament or the new testament writers are hoping you know this and so let me ask you this fun question who was the first all right kids if you're taking notes you can write this down this is a group this is a good good knowledge to know here we go who were the first priests in the old testament now we might want to turn to something like exodus or levicus to find that but no you'll actually find it in the first three chapters of genesis the first three chapters of genesis tells us about our first priest which is actually adam and eve adam and eve are the first priests in the bible let me explain it to you this way a temple is often where the priests serve this is where they go in between the people and the presence of whatever god it is that they serve so in our case we're going to talk about israel god had them build a tabernacle and eventually a temple and that is where the presence of god dwelt and that's where the priests would go in between the presence of god and the

people the way in which the language is described in genesis is the garden of eden sorry eden had within it a garden and within that garden what was there the presence of god because it walked with adam and eve and what did god give adam and eve the responsibility of they were to rule the world they were to administrate over it and they were to fill it they were the first ones the first priests to go between god and his presence within the garden and then be the connection to the rest of the world and so this idea is what actually structures the rest of the bible because what ends up happening in this temple in this presence where god's original design to be with his people with his creation with humanity we hear of the deception that comes in and destroys and that's in genesis chapter 3 and verse 5 and what's the deception instead of being a representative of god instead of enjoying the blessings and the benefits of who he is they were tempted to become god to leave the priesthood and enter in divinity this is genesis chapter 3 verse 5 for god knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like god knowing good and evil he is withholding good things from you so taste and become god god so rather than embracing the gifts and the experience of god they were tempted and in doing so it says that he put them out of the garden out of the presence of god the blessings of being in the original design of eden are now gone and it's being blocked by cherubims but there's a promise that is given to them outside of the temple doors outside because he closed the gates of the garden remember outside of the temple doors he says this to them but there is a seed who will come who will restore you to my presence but he first has to deal with the one who deceived you he has to crush the head of the serpent so from this moment forward the priesthood and temples were all pictures pointing to the the final temple the final priest that was promised in genesis 3 15 it just begins to unfold at this moment the presence of god is blocked from them they cannot go back in to the garden of eden it is finally restored to them through who through abraham who eventually brings us the children of israel who eventually brings us the levitical law and the priesthood where god's presence then comes back down into the temple we're not going to spend time this week looking through all of the priests and the significance behind them we are next week because it is wonderful how god uses abraham moises and david as pictures of the final priest that is to come and the pictures that are there but when you read the levitical law some of you have gone through this part if you're doing a yearly bible reading through the bible and you read through the requirements of the priesthood i promise you god didn't put those in there so you could uh read them to fall asleep at night when you're having a problem sleeping he also did not read put them in there to test your dedication of whether you were going to stick with it or not they are significant to understand the intricacies between his presence and us and what happens between the two they're all pictures all of israel's priests would fail it was the point of watching them fail because you had to keep asking this question who will come and be that final priest that was promised to us in genus 3 these priests keep failing and if they fail we fail because think about it they are

the representative between us and god and if they fail we're without god and his blessings and his power and his salvation so that's the introduction let's dive in i'm going to try and talk slow i'm going to try and not get excited but this is awesome here we go my poor wife like 11 o'clock last night she's like uh-huh is it time for bed she was excited but i came to bed late excited as well first of all the individuals chosen as priests in the old testament under yahweh were entrusted with three primary duties given to them um i'm so sorry but not to leave it totally just popped in my mind priestly duties i've freeways in the movie i apologize but their responsibilities that were given to them were this uh you would notice as you read about what they were doing in the temple they were singing they would actually write songs and they would use them for the sake of reflecting god and nature of god and the encouragement of the people they would be offering sacrifices not only for their sins but the sins of the people and blessings and thirdly they were intercessory prayers they would pray on behalf of the people we see this in abraham david and mooses but that was part of their responsibility the way and this is important for you to remember so i summed it up in three s's like what does a priest do this is i promise you're going to want to remember this later three s's they sing they do sacrifices and they do supplications pretty easy to remember right seeing sacrifices supplication now i have a random question for you we're going to pivot for a second a second random question why was jesus baptized by john the baptist you ever thought about that ever wondered john is calling israel they've been worshiping other gods he says you need to stop messiah's coming he's coming and he's bringing the kingdom and so he was giving them the cleansing of baptism this was a ritual cleansing this is not the same baptism of the new testament and not the baptism that jesus received because jesus didn't repent of serving other gods so he walks down into the water and he says john baptize me and he says jesus you need to baptize me i'm the sinner you know i'm the one who needs it and it's fascinating what he says if you turn to matthew chapter 3 and verses 15 and following you need to hear this so jesus john has already identified jesus behold the lamb of god who will take away the sins of the world he's using priestly languages because priests are the ones who present the sacrifice he is saying hello this is the lamb and the priest and so jesus gets into the water says to john baptize me and john says you need to baptize me instead listen to what jesus says matthew 3 15 but jesus answered him let it be so now for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness to fulfill all righteousness then he consented john got what jesus was saying look what happened next and when jesus was baptized immediately he went up from the water and behold the heavens were open to him and he saw the spirit of god descending like a dove and came to rest upon him and behold a voice from heaven said this is my beloved son with whom i am well pleased this is all old testament fulfillment it's great but why is it important that john recorded this conversation and this action john stopped arguing when he heard the words from jesus you need to baptize me because it fulfills requirements see righteousness is

to obey to obey to be righteous is to obey the law and so Jesus is saying I need to obey the law to fulfill the requirements upon me quickly I want to read to you a list of requirements of what was given to the Levitical priest and I want you to pay close attention to how they connect to Jesus okay I know this is nerdy right now but I promise you the connection's good first of all a priest could not begin his ministry until the age of 30 we'll learn this of Jeremiah he's waiting by the banks to turn 30 once he does he becomes a priest and a prophet before the nation Jesus on his 30th birthday sees John and he comes to begin the process of his priesthood number two a priest especially the high priest who Jesus is had to be called of God and it was the priest of Aaron of the priesthood of Aaron how many times did Jesus say I have been sent here by the Father my Father has called me I'm here to do as the will it's very clear that Jesus was called as a priest a priest had to be without defect in several ways it's clear that Jesus proved in 30 years of his life he was perfect the only priest to be perfect a priest had to be a male a priest had to descend from Aaron which which you ever wonder why the long lineages are in your uh New Testament sending you uh to Jesus because Jesus cannot be the great high priest if he's not of the right line and so he is he's of the right lineage they aren't there for fun listen to this a priest had to be washed in water as his ordination so it was a part of him being ordained into it was a it was a ritual symbolism okay but here is the significant part in the connection not only they had to be washed in water but it had to be a priest who had all it had to be done by a priest who had already been inaugurated into the priesthood I said these are all the requirements once you're baptized by another priest you immediately begin your ministry okay that's how the Levitical law worked so when did Jesus start healing and teaching and praying and cleaning up the temple when did he do this right after his baptism what does this tell you when you put all of the requirements together and you put the story together in Matthew what you are seeing is that first of all we do know that John who is of the son of Zachariah who is a Levite a priest John himself is a priest baptizing a priest fulfilling the last requirement to fulfill all righteous requirements and Jesus comes up out of that water and immediately starts doing priestly work fascinating now some might say well I don't know about that is that how Jesus saw his baptism yes turn to Matthew chapter 21 if you're still in chapter 3 turn to Matthew 21 Jesus is causing all kinds of problems because he now assumes the role of great high priest he's been inaugurated by God God put him there he's fulfilled all righteousness he goes into the temple and he says this is all wrong what you are doing is not God's intention and that was the role literal role of the great high priest in the Levitical law was to keep the temple cleansed from its evil so he's sitting on the temple steps and they come before him this is the other Caiaphas the great high priest and the other priests are like who do you think you are to walk into our house who we're under the commission of God and take over our job by what authority do you do this this is Matthew 21:25 Jesus replies to them the baptism of John from where did it come from heaven or from man oh where is Jesus claiming his authority I got it from John

[ 20 : 26 ] who got it from his father who got it from god now there's this fun discussion like well if we say from john he's right but if we don't then the people are going to hang us so what do we do so they give him no answer eventually they kill him jesus is pointing to this baptism saying this is the entrance into the priesthood it's safe not only did jesus acknowledge this john acknowledged just because john ended up baptizing him what is connecting what peter is connecting here is that jesus do you remember this story when jesus dies as the great high priest the final lamb who takes away this into the world when jesus dies there in the temple is god's presence and veiled is this massive veil keeping us from it because it would consume us and destroy us and only the great high priest could go up to the veil but never into his presence when jesus dies what happens to the veil rips in two there no longer needs to be a veil of protection between sinners and god the people who have been in the temple is the king of the church is the king of the church is the king of the church is the king of the church the children of israel brought out of egypt and god comes before them to speak to them as a people and it's so terrifying listen to the account this is exodus 2018 now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of trumpet and the mighty smoke the people were afraid and trembled and they stood far off and said to moises you speak to us and we will listen but do not let god speak to us lest we die being in the presence of god as a sinner is terrifying but how does that change what is the writer of hebrews says oh you do not have to be afraid the veil has been torn the sins have been covered your great high priest now represents you before god you can run into his throne with confidence but his presence isn't now housed in a temple are you guys following me with this it's not housed in a temple anymore what did peter just say you're the living stone you actually house that presence that was here and terrified everyone covered by veil all of israel says don't let him talk to us anymore he lives inside you whoa terrifying and exciting and mind-blowing and i need a cup of coffee to contemplate this for a moment right whoa this is this is unreal the role of priest doesn't end you see the the job of the priest is to represent god to the people so without priest this is the view of god that people are left with if you talk to people in our world who don't have god's salvation and god living within them often they're terrified of god or they have the wrong view of god or they serve another god so peter is saying there's something significant about you it's not that jesus died and it's over it's only begun turn with me to galatians chapter 3 and look at verse 27 here's where all the nerdiness comes together right here okay here's where all the all my excitement we're gonna just drop it right here listen to how paul connects jesus is baptized as a priest from john now jesus is the great high priest he's fulfilled all the priestly requirements for us because we can't do it

it we can't fulfill the priestly requirements he fulfills them then listen to what paul says galatians 3 27 for as many of you as were baptized into christ have put on christ who baptized you jesus the priest he brought you into the priesthood and now you put on and the way in which it's described as he clothed you with himself he clothed you with his priestly robes you see when a priest would come up out of the water and he will finish the requirements of being priest they would put on the robes so that all of the people would say oh yes this is a priest of yahweh he's wearing the clothes he's robed for god you come up out of the water being baptized by christ and he closed you spiritually with his priestly robe not one you earned one he earned see how the symbolism of baptism changes baptism is pointing us toward our role of what we have received and now not only how we changed but what we now do i just want to walk through the requirements again and just show you how peter connects these and paul connects these one must be called you have to be called in order to be a priest first peter 2 4 as you come to him a living stone rejected by men in the sight of god but chosen and precious he chose you to be in his family one must come from the right line what is galatians 3 29 say if you're still there and if you are christ then you are abraham's offspring heirs according to the promise you're of the right line right you've been chosen you're of the right line one must have no defects peter's already told us this first peter 1 22 having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth we are cleansed one must be baptized by a priest who are we baptized in the name of under the authority of who christ raised in his resurrection right one must then start priestly ministries after their baptism that's where we're at in first peter chapter 2 look at verse 9 but you are a chosen race a royal priesthood a holy nation a people for his own possession here's where we start our work that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light whoa once you were not a people but now you are god's people once you had not received mercy but now you've received mercy beloved i urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh because that's not a part of your priestly role which wage war against the soul keep your conduct amongst the gentiles those who you are representing too you're not carrying this to them honorable so that when they speak against you as evil doers they may see your good deeds and glorify god on the day of visitation don't tell me that god isn't expecting us in every area of our life amongst unbelievers to be the light to them but it's interesting is that he doesn't necessarily talk to them proclaiming the gospel that happens but what is he concerned about as temple bearers those who are the temple he says your conduct among them becomes the very thing that points them to the god that lives inside of you this is why he's like you've got to put away the old life because that's how the world lives we live different we look different

it terrifies me to think that god wants me to represent him i think about people who represent the united states and other countries that's probably got to be a hard job how much more to represent god this is why at times i think we are ashamed of our faith because we know if we tell people we're of god they would be hmm that doesn't make sense to me i'm not shaming you we're all confessing if we do not walk by faith and we do not trust the gospel and we don't rely on the holy spirit our lives will never reflect the hope that comes from god now here is the last amazing word picture peter uses if you go to first peter chapter 2 and go back to verse 5 from last week it's so hard to comprehend this but we're going to do our best first he says first peter 2 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house christianess to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to god why are they accepted this is so important what's the last two words last three words through jesus you are not accepted because you did the good works you're accepted because you're in the robe of jesus going here god i'm doing this for you but you i know you accept that on behalf of jesus that's where the confidence comes from that's why children with misspelled words and horrible i love them children they're beautiful horrible paintings run up to you and say see what i've done because they know their parent is excited to see them try their best our father wants us to do what we've been called to do and he for some crazy reason wants to partner with and i mean the word partner with every single person in this room he wants to change the world he wants to save the world he wants to pull them out of darkness darkness like he pulled you out of darkness but he uses you could he i mean listen a lot of the announcements that came to the world like mary she's going to house god came to the came to her from an angel angels make announcements all the time the uh the shepherds in the field got a angel announcement you know what he tells you okay god's word it's called gospel it actually houses all of god's power and angels don't announce it they're super fascinated by it and they look into it all the time but they're not the ones who announce it it comes from your mouth and god wants it to come from your mouth you mean you want me to bring out god's power right are you starting to feel it the one where a million people said don't ever let god talk again you're now taking those words and giving them to people in darkness so trust the point of all of this how he's clothed you he loves you his mercy is upon you you you're you were not a people you are a people you didn't have mercy you have mercy we trust in his power not in our strength if we try to do the mission of jesus in our own strength we will continue to do what we're doing we're going to buckle and hide and we're going to find excuses to not do the work because we're not trusting in his power when we're doing the priestly work we trust his truth not our wit sometimes we think well i if they ask me a question i don't know the answer these people are smarter than me god literally had paul write down just so you know if you're in the church and you're saved you're dumb he says i choose the weak the unwise i choose the frail because at the end when someone comes to life they're not going to go



ha look what i did they're going to go look what god wow look what god did through this little stone this little part of the temple i can't believe he did that through me i can't believe he wants to do that through me i can't believe i get to do it again so we trust his plan of using the church to rescue the world not our plan of some form of personal evangelism listen we are going to reach the light out into the dark but we don't do it in our own strength stay tuned we have more to learn about that but this is how peter is connecting us to the rest of this letter he's going to talk about what it looks like in our homes in our community in the government but we make a connection remember what the three s's were for being a priest singing sacrifice and supplication this is good write these down singing ephesians 5 18 what does paul tell the church and do not get drunk with wine don't be controlled by things in the world for that is debauchery be controlled by the spirit be filled by the spirit how is that addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs singing and making melody to the lord this is your new priestly role this is what we do is praise for each other we sing sacrifices man we know this verse romans 12 1 i appeal to you therefore brothers be by the mercy of god to present your bodies as a living sacrifice all of us we it's handed over to the work of god our whole life is for him supplications first timothy chapter 2 verse 1 first of all then i urge that supplications prayers intercessions and thanksgiving be made for all people for kings and all who are in high positions that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life godly and dignified in every way this is why we do a prayer of praise every week we pray to praise the glorious king and how he has loved us and that we pray for our leaders local and global this is why we do it every week because we want to be fulfilling our priestly role to the world and to each other so this role is significant our life matters because our work matters because we represent the king there isn't a person in here that is more significant it's not like some of us have bigger like i'm i'm a bigger block of a stone i'm a bigger blockhead that's for sure but i'm not a bigger stone than you are everywhere you have to have all the stones in order to have a temple this way he says when the church functions as it should the light of the temple the light goes out we don't know how god is drawing his people in our community to himself that's never our job some till up the ground some plant the seed some water god gives the increase we don't know how that looks it might be through our love and kindness it might through the proclamation of the gospel it might be through deeds of the hand we don't know but we can be confident that every good deed we do through christ god uses for his mission by the way i want to make this one point because i think it's significant in understanding our view of baptism going forward as a church this is why the last step of the believer is to receive the commission into the royal priesthood is baptism they have acknowledged their calling they said listen god called me i believe in him right i've received his righteousness the church acknowledges this and through the means of the church of the power of the ordained church god baptizes his people in the name of christ by his authority and then we are robed this is why it says we are robed in the righteousness of christ this is what baptism signifies our priestly inauguration and robing this is why according to our confession we don't baptize children babies infants because they have

not met all of the priestly requirements they have not met the role you must accept god's calling and believe in him by faith and trusting in him baptism so baptism becomes the last step before our acts of obedience being brought into the kingdom into his family and then being a light to the nations i understand that there are various views on baptism throughout church history and we as elders have taken the position that if one does not oppose our view fight us against it but are willing to be shepherded underneath it we accept evangelical baptisms that may differ in this view and we are willing to partner and work alongside of them and many of you are in here but as our church stands and it's based upon this type of theology and it's not one that i'm shy of we look to our baptism as this amazing symbol of sign we remember the significance of our life the moment your sin gets a hold of you the moment what the world beats you down that the the that time where you're man i don't think my life is of any value there's no significance peter says hmm you're a royal priest you were baptized by the high priest he brought you into his family he lives inside of you everything you say and do is a reflection of him you are beyond this world's significance because you belong to him you see baptism isn't just something little that we do baptism becomes this beautiful sign of the entrance into the most significant part of our life the family of god and the role of priest we'll continue to look at this in light of the temple next week within the community god basically plants little temples called churches into the community and this is where peter's going next in detail of what this looks like i want to uh just close our time this morning hopefully if the one thing that you walk away with which there's a lot here i know i hope you walk away with this the significance that you have before god according to peter has nothing to do with your former life who you once were and more importantly it has nothing to do with how well you perform now that's what's what's so hard about this if god wanted to trust in your works he would not put himself in you this is the greatest joy of the new covenant he says in the new covenant i will cut out that stony heart that can't love me and then i'm going to put in a heart that's beating for me it's going to demonstrate my love because in order for me to cut out that stony heart i got to die jesus has to die right he pulls it out pays for the price of it puts in a beating and then he says i will put my word in you and i will cause you to walk in my ways that's another word picture of the temple he he brings us to life he puts us in the right family he chooses us he then comes and dwells inside of us he then uses the symbol of baptism to fulfill all righteousness and then says child you're mine just keep looking at me looking unto jesus the author and finish of our faith we'll lay aside our sin and we lay aside the weight and we go do the work of the kingdom that gives me energy to say no to sin and yes to jesus yes to the kingdom to look

[ 41 : 00 ] at people in the eyes when you go to lunch this week and you look at your children this week you look at the neighbors look past what they're wearing and saying look past what they've done look deep down into the darkness of their eyes and say i am here to rescue their soul now god may use my kindness he may use my money my time he may use my words i don't know what he's using but i know he's using me and so we'll start with the simplest of these christians we need to be kind people okay god uses niceness sinners were drawn to jesus because he was angry and beat them no they were drawn to jesus because they couldn't figure out why a man like him would love them the world needs to be intrigued why do you care about us and it can start as simple as loving your husband your wife your children your neighbor it's simple and then let god do his work from there let us pray father we are beyond confused at times but we know that your spirit will come and illuminate our hearts to this truth the word of god does not return void it goes down into our souls and it convicts us may we see your glory may we understand your wonder may these pictures of the priest and baptism be that which encourages our faith today that we know you live in us you want us you love us and you're here to accomplish your work through us in christ's name amen thanks for listening to the sermon podcast of grace reformed church in spring hill tennessee where everyone is in equal need of grace to plan a visit or to learn more about us visit our website at [gracereformed.org](http://gracereformed.org)