

A Holy Priesthood

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you'll be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. In Exodus chapter 30, you're finding out about God's working through His people, and we are in the tabernacle, and now there's the holy priesthood.

So there are four things I want to tell you about this holy priesthood. But in verse 1, thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon. And this incense is a symbol of prayer, and that's the first thing that you could write down.

They were a praying people. You write that down. They were a praying people. They had a God who answered prayer, a God who heard prayer. And this chapter is about them being priests.

It's about them being people that dealt with God. Go, if you would, to chapter 30 and verse 6. And look at chapter 30 and verse 6. And thou shalt put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with you.

Over the ark of the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And so in the ark of the testimony there, in the ark, there's the Ten Commandments. Those Ten Commandments would send you to hell.

[1 : 14] They would show you that you don't deserve to be saved. Above that's a mercy seat. That's where he meets with us. That's where the blood sacrifice. That's where representation of Jesus dying for us.

Verse 10. Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in the year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements. Once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations.

It is most holy unto the Lord. The second thing I want to... Well, let me just... Let me just... I will walk you through it so quickly if I can. Look in your Bible at 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 5.

We are priests also. And we are God's priests here in the New Testament. The Bible says in 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 5, Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

That really sums up chapter 30. If you wrote that in the margin of your Bible in Exodus chapter 30, that sums it up. That's who we are. That's a foreshadowing of who we would become.

[2 : 20] That's the Old Testament. That's the Jews. We're the New Testament. We're the church. But look at what it says. A holy priesthood. In verse 5. A holy priesthood. A spiritual house. A holy priesthood.

We offer up spiritual sacrifices. God accepts them. But he only accepts them because of Jesus Christ. In Revelation chapter 1 and verse 6, the Bible said, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

He has made us kings. He has made us priests. Number 1, we have a God who hears prayer. We have a God who hears prayer. When he talked about incense in chapter 30 and verse 1, the Bible often compares incense to prayer.

Psalms 141:2 says, Let my prayer be set before thee as incense. In Revelation chapter 5 and verse 8, the Bible says, And when he had taken the book, the four and twenty beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having one of them, every one of them, harps and golden vials full of odors, incense, which are the prayers of the people.

And that's where God met with them. There at that altar. That altar. They met with God there. At the altar. At the mercy seat. Based on a sacrifice. Based on a substitution.

[3 : 39] Somebody took my place. Somebody took my place in my sin. I couldn't fix myself. I couldn't make things right. I got right because of what Jesus did for me.

When they prayed, they were required to use right ingredients. We don't have time to go over all that, but in verse 9, they were told, You shall make no strange incense, nor burnt to sacrifice, nor meat offering, neither shall you pour drink offering their own.

You do it my way. Now, real quickly, real quickly, in the New Testament, we're taught how to pray too. And we don't pray like everybody else prays. You've learned that. We don't pray like everybody else prays.

We pray, and he gave us a model prayer, what you call the Lord's Prayer. And he said, When you pray, you pray after this manner. We don't pray using a bunch of words. We don't say rosaries. We don't repeat prayers.

We talk from our heart to God through what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross of Calvary. We talk to him. And our prayers are made possible. And the only way God would ever hear them is that Jesus opened the door, that Jesus made my prayer get through.

[4 : 44] The way God listens to me is because I go through what Jesus did on the cross for me. Then look, if you would, at chapter 30 and verse 16. The second truth.

Number one, you're priests. You and I are priests. We are going to talk to God. We're a holy priesthood. We're a nation unto God. Not the United States, but us as a church.

We are his people. And they were, number two, to remember what God had done. In chapter 30, he says, I want you to remember what I've done. Verse 16, he said, Thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shall appoint it to the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord to make an atonement for your souls.

Just underline the word memorial. Here's what he's going to say in verse 30. They're going to take an offering when they count to people. And here's what he wants them to do. Don't you forget what I did. That's when we take the Lord's Supper.

We're saying, don't you forget. He's saying, not us. He said, don't you forget what I did. We remember that it was Jesus who died on the cross. It was Jesus who paid our sin debt.

[5 : 50] It was Jesus that did the work. And we remember what he did for us on the cross of Calvary. We remember what he did for us on the cross of Calvary.

We are to be thankful. God reminds you that something happens in our churches. After you've been in church a long time and after you've heard a lot of messages on don't do this and do this, you get real spiritual.

You get real holy. You get to thinking that you're really good and you're not like other people. You don't look like them. You don't talk like them. You're another culture. You're doing things differently and you quit being thankful and you start being proud.

You quit saying, boy, God did a work in me and you start getting an arrogant spirit about you. I'm a Christian and bless God, I'm holy and bless God, I do right. And all of a sudden you quit being thankful.

Instead of being thankful, you become critical. Chapter 30 was to say, don't do that. Chapter 30 was to say, don't do that. In chapter 30 and verse 17, they were to keep clean.

[6 : 48] They were to keep clean. In chapter 30 and verse 17, he put a laver of brass for their ceremonial cleaning. Chapter 30, verse 18, thou shalt also make a laver of brass and his foot will be a brass to wash with all.

Thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar. From where you all stand, if we get the altar, clean up before you get there. The laver was between the people and the altar. It was like the word of God that works in our lives and brings about holiness and cleanliness.

Did you know we believe in grace? And we thank God that we're saved. And we thank God he's made a difference in our lives. And we don't walk around being critical of other people. And we can celebrate the fact that God loves me no matter what I do.

I don't do anything to make him love me more. I don't do anything to make him love me less. But never do I ever think, man, I don't want to live a holy life. Never do I settle for just being a regular guy.

Always I'm thinking he's so clean and he loves me and he's done a work in my life. I want to work for him. I want to serve him. I want to grow in holiness and cleanliness.

[7 : 53] I want to focus on God and let him do a work in my life. Do you work at keeping a daily walk with God? Are you working that the world doesn't contaminate you and pull you away from God?

Are you working that that's not going to happen in your life? So there are three things so far. I'll give you the last one in just a second. I will just remind you we're a praying people because we've got a prayer hearing and a prayer answering God.

So we go to God and we say to him, God, you made us special people that could talk to you. We're here to talk to you about our needs, of course. We're here to talk to you about a whole world that needs to hear the gospel message of Jesus Christ.

We're here to pray for your power, for your blessing, and for your work for us to accomplish the task you gave us to do. The second thing we looked at there is we're never going to forget where we came from. We're never going to forget where we came from.

We're never going to forget who we were, who we were when he saved us. And he saved us out of filth. He saved us out of sin. He saved us out of being horrible people.

[8 : 53] And you say, I never was that horrible. Well, if you don't think you were that horrible, you probably never really saw yourself for who you were. Because though I didn't do any of those things that men label as bad, I was a pretty good kid.

I was raised in a deacon's home. I was always at church. I was always trying to quote unquote serve God. I now know what a sinner I was. My mouth has gotten the best of me many times.

My anger has gotten the best of me. I have messed up quite a bit in my life. I want to remember where he brought me from. And I want to remember that I want to be clean and holy. I want to serve him.

I want to take advantage of the fact that I know him and I want to walk closely to him. The last one I want to show you real quickly. There was a special anointing that goes on in chapter 30. Verse 5, they anointed those holy men, those priests.

Now back then it's just a set number of people. In the New Testament it's different. In verse 25 it said, And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary, and it shall be a holy anointing oil.

[9 : 56] So God had this way of saying, I'm going to mark things as mine. And he would take this oil and he would place it on it. He marked the things in the tabernacle in verse 26. In verse 30 he marked Aaron and the priest.

And they were never allowed, in verse 37 they were never allowed to make that same smell, to make that same anointing oil. It could never be used anywhere else. You couldn't go home and say, I really like the smell they got down at the church.

I like the smell they got at the tabernacle. I'm going to see if I can't come up with that. Because it was designated for God and his people. They were never supposed to make that oil. In verse 38. I'd like to remind you tonight that today we're all anointed.

There's a major difference. There was a time when the man of God, the preacher, the priest, was like this special, really weird individual. He talked to God, and you came to him to talk to God.

But today, you all talk to God. We have what we call priests of the believer. That's one of our doctrines. We believe that you can talk to God. You still got to go through a priest, but the priest is Jesus.

[10:58] In the New Testament church, we're priests. By the way, you're anointed. As much as I'd like to say, hey, I'm the only anointed guy in this room, or me and the preacher are the only anointed guys in this room, that's not true.

In the New Testament, in the New Testament, I'll read you some verses in just a second, that's not true. You can't use the anointing of these priests as an excuse to get you out of it. You can't say, I'm not the one that's called and get you out of doing what God wants you to do.

You do not get away with thinking that there are two groups of people and you lucked out and that God didn't call you into the God-serving group. We're all His servants. He saved us and bought us, and we belong to Him, and we're to serve Him.

We as believers are anointed by the Holy Spirit. 1 John 2, verse 20. 1 John 2, verse 20. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

But the anointing which ye have received of Him, verse 27, verse 27, the anointing which ye have received of Him abides in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teaches you of all things that is truth that is no lie, even as it has taught you, you shall abide in Him.

[12:10] The Holy Spirit lives in every one of us. I don't get to walk around here thinking, man, I'm the man of God, and y'all aren't the men of God. I don't get to walk around here thinking, I'm somebody special. We are His temple.

He is our teacher. It is Him that anoints us for service. In 2 Corinthians, chapter 1, verse 21, 2 Corinthians 1, 21, the Bible says, Now He which establishes us with you in Christ and hath anointed us is God.

It's God that anoints me, God that anoints you, God's anointed all this stuff. Everything we've got around here belongs to God, and you're going to want to serve Him. Do you realize that you belong to God and you ought to serve Him?

Is everybody in this room, have you come to the realization, have you come to the realization, I am not my own. I have been bought with a price. Have you come to the place in your life when you realize that God said, I saved you and I named you and I called you mine and I got a job for you to do and I've given you the Holy Spirit and I've given you the Bible, you have a job to do, you're to serve me.

Do you consider yourself the anointed of God? Oh, if you ever thought of yourself as really being God picked, God chosen, God anointed, God filled, God blessed, you'd probably tell somebody about Jesus.

[13 : 25] You'd probably be more interested than say, I'm going to do something for God. I didn't know why it was all that stuff, but you are all that stuff. You're supposed to be doing something for God. In Exodus chapter 30, we are reading a different story in Exodus chapter 30 if we'd have time to go through.

We're talking about Aaron. We're talking about Aaron's brothers. We're talking about a few other guys. But in the New Testament, all that changed. In the New Testament, he said, I'm just going to name all y'all priests. I'm just going to anoint all of y'all.

I'm just going to let all y'all talk straight to me. Only requirement is you've got to come through the high priest. And the high priest is Jesus. Come to Him. You come to Him, I'll talk to you. You come through Him, I'll talk to you.

You and I are God's people. Do you spend time in prayer and Bible study seeking Him? Do you serve Him like you are really His servant? Is this the time that you should decide that you will start living out what He has done in you?

Four things. Number one, we are praying people because we've got a God who hears and answers prayer. I ought to ask God to do stuff because He's a big God, a powerful God who hears and answers prayer.

[14 : 26] He set them up and said, y'all burn incense. Worship me. Talk to me. Number two, we're to remember Him. A memorial. Boy, He's good. Boy, He's strong. He's done great things in my life.

I love Him. I worship Him. I magnify Him. They're to be clean. Before they got over to the altar, they were supposed to go by and wash themselves and this is how you wash yourself.

This right here. You're not going to do it. By the way, let me just say this. Praying ain't going to do it because you can pray and feel good about yourself. You read this, you'll find out who you really are and then you can say, okay God, I need you to work on my life for that. You are working.

You're showing me. So get in the book and let the book You're Picked. You're Chosen. You're Special. Your Money's Not Yours. Your Life Isn't Yours.

Your Family Isn't Yours. No more than Aaron's would have been his in Exodus chapter 30. We belong to God. How are we going to live it out? Father in Heaven, I thank You for the chance to speak to Your people.

[15 : 21] I pray tonight that You'd help us to love You and trust You and believe You and walk in You. I pray, dear God, that You would do a work in our lives. God, I pray You'd call some folks out to serve You.

I pray You'd help some people to recognize who they are and what You've done and that You would be magnified and glorified in their lives. I pray some people would surrender to You tonight.

I pray some of us that haven't prayed. I confess I don't pray near as much as I should. I don't believe as much as I should. I acknowledge to You, God, that I'm not as thankful as I ought to be.

I don't remember so much all that You've done for me like I should. I would acknowledge to You, Lord, I need more time in Your Word. I need to let it be cleaning me up and cleaning up my attitudes and my thought and my mouth and every part of me, dear God.

And I pray, dear God, You'd help me to remember I'm Yours. I've been anointed. I belong to You. Just like that altar belonged to You, just like everything else belonged to You, I pray You'd help me to live that out and I'll give You praise.

[16 : 17] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.