

# The Priesthood of All Believers

*Promise: Jesus' ongoing ministry through us will result in a harvest*

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Exodus 19:2-8; Ps 100; Rom 5:6-15; Matthew 9:35—10:20

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*"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."*— Mt 9:37-38

**Lead In** – "The priesthood of all believers" is a term that is derived from our first lesson, Exodus 19:5-6... And importantly it has 1 Peter 2:9 in mind... What is meant by 'priesthood' needs a little unpacking but suffice it to say at the outset that the mission of our Lord and Savior of seeking after and saving the lost has been entrusted to all of us. All baptized believers in Christ are ministers. Being a Pastor is just one kind of minister. There are many kinds of ministers, all serving the Gospel of our Lord.

## I. The Priestly Ministry of the OT Has Been Fulfilled

- A. The sons of Aaron primarily offered sacrifices...
- B. The sustained argument in the Book of Hebrews...
- C. Jesus fulfills the OT priesthood...

## II. What Kind of Priesthood Are We All Involved In?

- A. What is left is prayers of praise and thanksgiving...
- B. Laity involved in this kind of sacrifice, as a witness...
- C. This does not preclude various offices in the church...

## III. The Practical Applications to this Priestly Ministry

- A. Offering thanks before partaking in 'daily bread'...
- B. Offering intercessory prayer for others, pray for them!
- C. Offering acknowledgment when given a compliment...

**Parting Shot** – Jesus told His disciples *the harvest is plentiful*. Unfortunately, the laborers are few. That is why they were to pray for additional laborers. Jesus says there is an abundant harvest. That does not mean that all our efforts will be immediately successful and seem a success. It is seed planting after all! But this also is what Jesus said, "*And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself*" (Jn 12:32). This referred to Jesus' Cross. And when we give witness to Jesus and His work of forgiveness effected on the Cross it will draw people to Him. Allow yourself to be sent into the harvest as a laborer, indeed as part of priesthood...

**Ex 19:5-6** Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; <sup>6</sup> and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

**1Pe 2:9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

**Le 1—7:** *Grain offerings, Sin offerings, Guilt offerings, Burnt offerings, Peace offerings, Fellowship offerings...*

**He 8:3** For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.

# Matthew 9:35-38; 10:16-20 ESV

*The Harvest is Plentiful, the Laborers Few*

<sup>35</sup> And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; <sup>38</sup> therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

<sup>16</sup> "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup> Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, <sup>18</sup> and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to say or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. <sup>20</sup> For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

**He 10:11-14** And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup> But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. <sup>14</sup> For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

**He 7:23-25** The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, <sup>24</sup> but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. <sup>25</sup> Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

**He 13:15** Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

**Ro 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

**Ac 14:23** And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Heavenly Father, Christ our Lord spoke of an abundant harvest if only there are enough laborers. Help us to see that we have been chosen in our baptism to labor in His vineyard and to exercise the priesthood that belongs to all believers. Lord, may the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts... Amen.