

Truth and Spirit Ministries

Reach The World For Jesus Part II

By Denise Bostic

The Priesthood of All Believers

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” (1 Peter 2:9 NIV)

Jesus is our High Priest. This great honor was foretold and bestowed upon Jesus by God the Father. Jesus sacrificed Himself on our behalf and through His obedience and suffering, He became a High Priest that could understand the feelings of our weaknesses. The scriptures tell us that Christ is a faithful son that serves over God’s house. Who is God’s house? We are God’s house! Those who are in Christ have become the house of God, His very own sons and daughters.

Do you know that you are royalty? Did you also know that you are a priest? We have been called out by God to be a holy nation of priests that serve the living God. (1 Peter 2:9) Receive the astounding truth that you are a priest of God! For too long a concept has been held in the Church that only those in the “ministry” are called to the priesthood and are solely responsible to preach the Gospel and that the only responsibility of the saints of God is to “go to Church,” pray and financially support those in the ordained ministry. Beloved do not believe that it is *only* the job of high profile ministers or your church leaders to go and preach the Gospel, it is a mandate given to the whole Church by Jesus Christ.

The problem is that many have a mind-set of what *preaching* is. Many brethren may say that they are not called to preach the Gospel but we must understand that the word *preach* in this context simply means *to proclaim openly*. [2784, Joseph Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament] The work of openly proclaiming the Gospel message is for the whole Church, of which you are included if you are in Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-12) Maybe you might not be called to go clear across the globe, but God may be calling you to reach people in your own *neighborhood, community, town or city*.

Please don’t misunderstand me; I am not saying that you should not support God’s ministers that are called to preach the Gospel. We should willingly support those that are called to travel and preach because they are accountable before the Lord to do what He has called them to do. Each joint and ligament in the body of Christ helps to support each other. The point that I want to make is that all believers must realize that they are called to minister and serve the Lord as well. All believers need to receive the truth that they are priests of the Lord as well under the New Covenant. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

Of course we all have different gifts and callings and are to serve the Lord in the manner in which He leads us. Each of us will reach people of diverse backgrounds in our own unique ways. (Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:27-30) If we all do what God has called us to do, it will all work together for the glory of God and His Kingdom.

When the Body of Christ as a whole understands the truth of the priesthood of all believers, the Church can have a vastly greater army of laborers in the harvest fields than just those in the “ordained ministry” and we can have a much, much greater impact in the world for Christ. As a priest of God, you are called out and chosen to be a part of a holy nation to serve in the house of God.

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness and into his wonderful light.” (*1 Peter 2:9*)

“But Christ is faithful as a son over God’s house. And *we are his house*, if we hold on to our courage and hope of which we boast.” (*Hebrews 3:6*)

The Household Of Faith

You and I are of *royal* blood and now belong to the household of God! We declare praises to God by sharing our testimony and this wonderful good news of the Gospel with others within our sphere of influence. Again, when we speak of the household of God, we are not *speaking of or limiting* our ministry work to the inside of the walls of a physical building. Many leaders and believers in the Church today call the building the “house of God.” Know that God does not reside in temples (buildings) made with the hands of men, but He dwells in temples (buildings) that have been created and built by His own hands. Brethren, you and I are temples of the living God!

Know that you are part of a spiritual house that is not bound to the limitations of four walls but we are free to reach anyone that God may send us to in our own part of the world. We are to be the Church wherever we go! Our work is to give glory to God by sharing the Gospel message with people so they too may receive eternal life and share in an inheritance among the saints. (*Acts 26:16-18, Mark 16:15-20*) As priests, everyone has something to offer God as we bring ourselves as living sacrifices before Him. The Apostle Paul admonished the Church:

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship.” (*Romans 12:1-2*)

As modern day priests of the living God, we are to offer up sacrifices unto God and serve in His household. Over the centuries this powerful truth of the priesthood of all believers has tragically been lost to many in the body of Christ. Throughout Church history, there have been many leaders that have illegitimately seized ungodly control and power over God’s people and stripped many believers of their authority as priests by telling them that they could not serve in the household of God. These leaders made themselves mediators between God and men, forgetting the fact that there is only one mediator between believers and God and that is Jesus Christ. (*1 Timothy 2:5*) They went against the Word of the Lord to not dominate over the flock of God and blindly ignored the fact that ministers were given as God’s gifts to the body of Christ and that their job was to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. (*1 Peter 5:2-3, Ephesians 4:11-12*)

During the time of the Great Reformation, God not only gave Martin Luther the great revelation that mankind was justified by faith in Christ and that salvation is by grace alone, the Lord also gave him the revelation of the profound truth of the priesthood of all believers. Where did Martin Luther receive this divine revelation? God revealed it to Him through His Word.

Somewhere between the establishment of the Church by Jesus and the time called The Great Reformation, the Church lost this vital truth and believers were robbed of their true identity in Christ. This awesome truth that God has restored to the Church in the middle ages has somehow been obscured again and needs to be re-emphasized in the Body of Christ in these end times.

Our Priestly Duties

The good news is that God has been restoring many to their priestly duties. He has been raising up leaders who understand this and know what they are called to do and are now teaching and preparing God’s people to do works of service for God once again. There is much work yet to be done though. Thankfully, some in the modern day Church have already begun to be mobilized by the Spirit of God, many believers are now being released into their divine purposes and we are gaining momentum! God will have a people to declare His praises in the earth.

What does a priest that serves in the house of God do? We can glean much information from the Old Testament about the priesthood of God. We know and understand that Aaron was the high priest serving God's people (Israel) in the time of Moses. Besides Aaron, there were many other priests that served in the temple (house of God). These priests represented the people of Israel before God because they had no personal relationship with Him and therefore could not enter into the Most Holy Place because Jesus had not yet died and shed His blood. (*Hebrews 7:11-12, 9:6-10*) This is why they needed priests to represent them before God.

Under the New Covenant however, all believers have access into the presence of God through the Most Holy Place because of the flesh and blood sacrifice of Jesus. (*Hebrews 10:19-22*) According to the Old and New Testaments, a priest represents man before God. For those who do not know the Lord today, they need someone to represent (intercede, petition) God on their behalf. Those who do not yet know God do not yet have a relationship with Him have no right to enter into the Most Holy Place until they come through the veil (the flesh and blood sacrifice of Jesus). Believers in Christ are now priests of God and should be interceding on behalf of those who need salvation so they may enter into personal relationship with God by way of Jesus.

Clothed In Christ

A royal priesthood wears royal robes. For those of us who have received Christ, we have now spiritually put on (been clothed in) Christ. What does this mean? It means that we have received the *Christos* or the anointed One and His anointing. It means that we have been given His divine nature- His love, compassion and power to reach out to a lost and dying world. (*Galatians 3:27, Colossians 3:10*) If you are a believer, the anointing abides within you as you abide in Christ. When we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are endued with supernatural gifts to accomplish His divine will. (*1 John 2:27, Acts 1:8*)

In the Old Testament the anointing of God was given to a select few for His divine purposes. In inaugural ceremonies priests, kings and sometimes prophets were anointing with an ointment of oil that was smeared on them. After this anointing ceremony took place, the one having been anointed was regarded as having been endued with the power of the Holy Spirit and divine gifts. (*1 Samuel 16:13, Isaiah 61:1*)

In the New Testament however, all who receive Christ have been given the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit. (*Acts 2:38-39*) God promised to pour out His Spirit on all flesh and fulfilled this end-time promise beginning on the day of Pentecost at the inception of the Church. (*Joel 2:28, Acts 2:1-21*) No longer would the power of the Holy Spirit be given to a select few, but all believers could now receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (anointing of God).

Jesus told His disciples that He would send the Holy Spirit. Before the day of Pentecost would be fulfilled, Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem to receive power that would enable them to be effective witnesses for Him in the world. The anointing of God empowers believers to supernaturally do what the Lord has called him or her to do.

Many believers fear stepping out for Christ because they say that they don't know what to say or do but realize, saint of God, that the Lord has not asked you to serve Him in your own strength or fleshly ability but in the power of His Spirit. (*Zechariah 4:6*) All you must do is ask for and receive His empowerment and trust that He will lead you to those needing salvation, He will give you what to say and what to do. When Jesus sent His disciples out to preach the Gospel He gave them this promise:

"On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you." (*Matthew 10:18-20*)

This promise is given to us today because we are Jesus' modern day disciples as well. We do not have to worry or be fearful about what we are going to say because God will fill our mouth with what to say by inspiration of His Spirit. Now that you have Christ in you, you have the spiritual wherewithal to reach people for the Kingdom of God, you must trust God to prepare you and then send you to those that He wants you to encounter.

Remember, you are now a priest of God in His royal household and you serve God in the power of His Spirit. Now that you know who you are, you must go on to serve God and learn of the power of the One who abides within you!

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