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**The Priesthood Of All Believers**

Today we come to point nine in our basics class and you'll notice once more that we have several points that clarify our ecclesiology or doctrine of the Church. Starting in point 8 of our Doctrinal Statement, the beginning and end of the Church. The Church began on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and will end at the pre-Trib Rapture; in point 9 the priesthood of all believers, in point 10 the distinction between the universal and local church, in point 11 the Lord's supper, in point 12 the spiritual gifts and in point 13 the two ordinances Christ left His church. So you can see from the emphasis in the doctrinal statement a high concern for clarification of the Church. In our time this is a very important articulation. In many ways it is the most important issue at the present time because the Holy Spirit brought this to the attention of the Church through John Nelson Darby in the 1820's. There were other men before him who saw the Church as distinct from Israel but he was the man who saw more clearly than any other that the Church is distinct from Israel, that there are two peoples of God, not one.

Now when we say two peoples of God don't confuse that with two ways of salvation. There are not two ways of salvation. There is only one way of salvation; salvation is always by grace alone through faith alone. So that's not the distinction we're referring to by saying there are two peoples of God. Basically all that's being stated is that Israel and the Church have a distinct origin in the plan of God; Israel and the Church have a distinct nature in the plan of God, Israel and the Church have a distinct purpose in the plan of God, Israel and the Church have distinct ministries of the Spirit in the plan of God, Israel and the Church have distinct priesthoods and Israel and the Church have a distinct destiny in the plan of God. There are all kinds of distinctions between Israel and the Church, L.S. Chafer says there are something like 30 distinctions. One of the strange things is I keep talking to

people about this and they say, I just don't see it. That's a frustrating thing and I wish more people could see it because it's very helpful to see. And for the last 200 years it's been the clarion call of the Holy Spirit to the Church to work it out.

So the church is a major area of study and last week we covered point 8, the origin and destiny of the Church which is distinct from the origin and destiny of Israel. This week point 9, the priesthood of all believers which is distinct from the priesthood of Aaron, Levi and Melchizedek. So another distinction with Israel. And to understand the priesthood of all believers we want to understand the priesthood of the OT nation Israel and use it as a stepping stone to understand our priesthood.

First of all, what is a priest? A priest is simply some one or some group that represents men on behalf of God, they are mediators between men and God and you find them inside and outside the Scripture. In the Scripture the first priest you find is Melchizedek, Gen 14:8 and he's a Gentile priest, he's also a king, he's interesting because later you didn't mix priest and king but here you have a priest-king and we don't know much about him, apparently he was the last of a line of Gentile priest-kings who protected the knowledge of God in the post-diluvian world until the Call of Abraham. And these two meet in Gen 14. That's when Abraham pays tithes to Melchizedek and is blessed by Melchizedek which means that Melchizedek is greater than Abraham. Then this strange figure disappears from the scene and you don't hear of him again until the Book of Hebrews where his priesthood comes up again and is set out as the archetype of Jesus Christ's priesthood, it's of the order of Melchizedek, not Aaron, not Levi, but Melchizedek. Christ's priesthood is most like Melchizedek's which indicates He's a priest-king. Now while the Melchizedekian priesthood disappears from the scene two other priesthoods come on the scene, the Aaronic priesthood and the Levitical priesthood. First of all Aaron: he was the high priest and coming out of him were the Levites. The priest functioned at the Tabernacle and later the Temple; they represented the people to God. They weren't perfect, yet they did mediate and if they sinned they'd have to offer a sacrifice or else the people they represented would be guilty because the sacrifices they offered on the people's behalf weren't any good. So there was this sacrificial system and it was very important because it was through the sacrificial system that the people came to God through the priest. This was the divinely prescribed

method of approaching God and if you tried to go some other way you'd be killed. So it was showing there was one way to approach God and that was through the priest and sacrifice.

This is all necessary background for our priesthood so let's make note of a few of the priestly functions. First of all as we said, he offered sacrifice on behalf of the people. The way this happened was if you were in the OT nation of Israel and you sinned you'd have to go up to Jerusalem to the Temple and take a sacrifice, then the priest would take the offering and sacrifice it on the altar on your behalf. If he did everything right then it was a pleasing aroma to the Lord. Secondly, he prayed on behalf of the people. The people needed prayer so these were the prayer warriors of the nation. Third, the priest taught the Law to the people. He had to know the law so he could go around and instruct people in the Law. That way people knew the word of God. Fourth, the priest was an example of holiness, at least he was supposed to be. He was to show the other people how to live in a way that pleased God because it's not enough to teach people how to live, you've got to also show them how to live. And fifth, he was a judge, he judged according to the Law because he knew the law better than anyone else, or he was supposed to know the law at least, so they also served as judges, they would judge according to the Law. So those are all elements of the Levitical priesthood and for the most part they are all mediatorial functions, they mediate between men and God.

Now bear in mind that the central feature of the Levitical priesthood was the physical temple in Jerusalem, you didn't do this in your backyard, you didn't do this in your prayer closet, it was a physical location on the planet where you met with God, it was a physical building made of gold, silver, bronze, certain kinds of wood, certain kinds of material and it was all a copy of the real temple which is in heaven; the real temple was not the one on earth, the one on earth was just a shadow of the heavenly one, the real temple is the heavenly one.

Now when the cross of Christ occurs, Christ Himself is a priest and He does something unique because He is both the priest who would offer the sacrifice and He is the sacrifice. The Levitical priests didn't offer themselves as sacrifices. So Jesus does something unique because He was both the priest and the sacrifice, He offered Himself up on the altar to God. And as the

perfect sacrifice He took away the sins of the whole world. No Levitical priest did that. So Jesus is not a Levitical priest, He's a priest after the order of Melchizedek. And the Book of Hebrews argues that with a change in priesthood there's a change in Law. So we're not under the Law of Moses, we're under the Law of Messiah. And this is what the Book of Hebrews is all about. The Hebrew Christians were going back under the Law of Moses and the Levitical priesthood with the Levitical sacrificial system and the author is saying, why are you going back there, that's a real step backward in the spiritual life. You don't need any earthly human priest to go to offer animal sacrifices for you so why are you going back to that, a far superior sacrifice has been given, Jesus Christ. He's our great high priest and He's seated in heaven, so now we go straight to Him because we are a priesthood.

So with Christ the whole priestly system has been changed. Then it revolved around an earthly temple in the earthly city of Jerusalem with the fallen, sinful priests. Now it revolves around a heavenly temple in heaven with the perfect High Priest Jesus Christ, There's been a change in the priesthood with Jesus Christ who offered Himself as the supreme sacrifice for the sin of the whole world.

Let's trace some of this is in the Book of Hebrews, starting in 4:14. Hebrews is about how Jesus Christ is so much better than anything, better than angels, better than Moses, you name it, Jesus is far greater. Notice verse 14, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God," remember Jesus Christ passed through the heavens at His ascension far above all powers and all authorities whether in earth or heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father, "let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin." Jesus Christ knows what you're going through, Jesus Christ has been tempted in all things as you have been tempted and He had to deal with it in His humanity by the same mechanics you have to deal with it. So He can sympathize with you, He knows what you're going through, the only difference is He didn't fall to any temptation. So verse 16, "Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." You need help, just go straight to the throne of grace, there's no need to go down to an earthly temple, to an earthly priesthood, you go straight to the throne of grace. Notice 5:1, "For

every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; <sup>2</sup>he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness; <sup>3</sup>and because of it he is obligated to offer *sacrifices* for sins, as for the people, so also for himself.” Remember, that was all the OT priests, they represented the people but they were sinners themselves, but not Jesus. Verse 4, “And no one takes the honor to himself, but *receives it* when he is called by God, even as Aaron was. <sup>5</sup>So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, “YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU”; <sup>6</sup>just as He says also in another *passage*, “YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.” And here’s the Melchizedekian priesthood showing up again, Jesus was of the order of Melchizedek. It’s an eternal order, not of the order of Aaron who died, all the priests died in the OT. Verse 7, “In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. <sup>8</sup>Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. <sup>9</sup>And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, <sup>10</sup>being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. <sup>11</sup>Concerning him we have much to say and *it is hard* to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.” He’s saying the Melchizedek doctrine is advanced theology; it’s not for the faint of heart. The author says I have a lot to say about this but you aren’t mature enough yet to handle it because you’re going backward in the Christian life, you should be teachers by now but your going back to the Levitical priesthood. So he encourages them to go on and mature and then in 7:1 he comes back to the Melchizedekian priesthood.

Here the point is that it is far superior to the Levitical priesthood. By comparison the Levitical priesthood is a joke. “For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, <sup>2</sup>to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all *the spoils*,” Who gave to who? Abraham gave to Melchizedek. So who is greater, Abraham or Melchizedek? Melchizedek. So here we have the father of Levi, Abraham, paying tithes to Melchizedek. Verse 11, “Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need *was there* for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be

designated according to the order of Aaron? <sup>12</sup>For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. <sup>13</sup>For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. <sup>14</sup>For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. <sup>15</sup>And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, <sup>16</sup>who has become *such* not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. <sup>17</sup>For it is attested *of Him*, “YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.” <sup>18</sup>For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness <sup>19</sup>(for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.” Verse 23, <sup>23</sup>The *former* priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, <sup>24</sup>but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. <sup>25</sup>Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. <sup>26</sup>For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; <sup>27</sup>who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the *sins* of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.” Isn’t Jesus greater, far greater, why go to an earthly priest? This x’s out Roman Catholicism, it x’s out any religious system that has a priestly system, there’s no reason to go to an earthly priest, that is all over, you are a priest now, and your great High Priest is Jesus Christ. He’s the only mediator. Heb 8:1, “Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, <sup>2</sup>a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. <sup>3</sup>For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this *high priest* also have something to offer. <sup>4</sup>Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; <sup>5</sup>who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned *by God* when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, “SEE,” He says, “THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN.” <sup>6</sup>But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which

has been enacted on better promises.” So He’s discarding all of the old earthly temple system, the old covenant, the old priesthood, all of it, now there is a heavenly temple, the real one, a new covenant, a new priesthood which is so much better. So to go back to the earthly temple system in Jerusalem which survived until the Romans around AD70 was to go back to a shadow of the real deal. It was to go backwards in the spiritual life.

Now I took you through all this because Hebrews shows you the bigger picture of the priesthood. And it’s a huge thing, we could go into a whole series of issues about how there’s been a change in law, that obviously impacts the Mosaic Law and the issue of the covenant but because the Old Mosaic Covenant has been fulfilled we now we live under a New Covenant. There’s a sense in which we are living under the spiritual aspects of the New Covenant. It’s not being fulfilled, but we are enjoying spiritual blessings that issue forth from the New Covenant.

And now we are a priesthood, every believer is a priest. And this is a huge, huge change. That was not true in the OT, but it is true now and there are similarities with the OT priestly functions; so let’s look at some of these. The first function that corresponds to the functions of the OT priests is sacrifice. They offered sacrifice and we offer sacrifice. The difference is they offered it on behalf of the people, the people couldn’t offer the sacrifice, they had to take it to the priest and the priest would offer it on behalf of them, but we offer our own sacrifice. And what is our sacrifice? Rom 12:1, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship.” This is a daily offering of sacrificing the flesh, killing the flesh so we can be of service to God. This is turning ourselves over to the service of God. You can do this, I can do this. You can do it as often as you like, the point is we are all on equal footing as believer priests. You don’t have to come to me, I don’t have to come to you, nobody has to go to anybody with the title priest whether they be Roman Catholic or Episcopal or Greek Orthodox, you don’t do that, you are a priest and you go straight to the High Priest. Second correspondence is prayer. The OT priest prayed on behalf of the people and it was a pleasing aroma to the Lord. And how do we do this? We pray on behalf of all men, which is good and acceptable in the sight of God our savior. We can go right into the throne room of grace, no intermediary, the only mediator between God and man is the man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim 2:1, “First of all, then, I

urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, <sup>2</sup>for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.” When we pray on behalf of others we are exercising our priesthood. Third correspondence is teaching others the word of God, that’s a function of all believers today. Maybe you teach a congregation, maybe you teach one other person, maybe you teach your children, but when you’re teaching others you’re exercising your priesthood. The fourth correspondence is we are to be examples of holiness, examples of holy lives. This is a spiritual act of service, live holy lives to be an example to others. It’s not enough to tell others how to live, you have to show them how to live, live consistently with what you teach. Fifth correspondence, and this is the judging aspect, we judge among ourselves. In OT Israel it was the priests who judged the nation according to the Law, in the NT Church it is all believers who judge one another according to the Scriptures. That’s why it says if a brother sins go to your brother and show him his fault. You’re making a judgment. When you do that not only are you operating biblically, you’re functioning in your priesthood. So there is a lot involved in this and our statement is separating us from all these groups that are trying to perpetuate some kind of earthly priesthood by telling people they have to come through their church and their priests. No you do not, that is a rejection of Jesus Christ’s Melchizedekian priesthood, that is a perpetuation of the Levitical priesthood and the author of Hebrews says that is going to cause you to go backwards in the spiritual life, it is going to end up wrecking your spiritual life. So you never go to an earthly priest. You draw near to the throne of grace to your great high priest. There is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus and don’t ever forget it, we have a fantastic position now.

As our statement says, 9. We believe that all true Christians are constituted by God a “holy Priesthood, (1 Pet. 2:9),” the reference there should be 1 Pet 2:5; 2:9 says “royal priesthood,” 2:5 says “holy priesthood,” and I don’t want to deal with Peter because frankly it’s not the bigger picture I’ve tried to give you from Hebrews. But notice the statement, “and, as such, are privileged to approach Him in worship, which, as God is spirit, must be in Spirit and truth (John 4:24).”

Turn to John 4:24. The emphasis here is on direct worship, not indirect through a church, not indirectly through a denomination, not indirectly



through an earthly priest, directly you worshipping Him in Spirit and in truth. Notice John 4:24, "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." Now what's the context of this statement? Who was Jesus speaking to? The Samaritan woman. So for one she's not a Jew. And good Jews didn't talk to Samaritans. Verse 9 stated that. So Jesus is out of line with the social norms of good Jews. And secondly he's talking to a woman. Now Jesus is committing the ultimate social boo-boo, talking to a woman and a Samaritan woman at that, but He's doing it nonetheless and in fact, He's evangelizing her. And in the bigger picture what He's doing is preparing His disciples for later because they walked in on this, they saw this and later they're going to have to go evangelize Samaritans, so Jesus is preparing the way. They didn't like it at the time but they understood later. But there's another significance to the Samaritans that we want to get to because what did the Samaritans believe? They just believed the Pentateuch, the first five books of the OT. They had what was called the Samaritan Pentateuch. And the difference in the books was the place of worship. Notice verse 20, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain," she's talking about Mt Gerizim, and you *people* say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." So what's the issue? The location of worshipping God. Where are the proper GPS coordinates? Mt Gerizim or Mt Zion? Verse 21, "Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father." So, there goes location, location for worshipping God is soon going to be a non-issue. For the time being, in verse 22 He corrects Samaritan theology, "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup>"But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers." So again, the issue is location, a time is coming when location will be irrelevant. Verse 24, "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." So location is irrelevant. Why is it going to be irrelevant? Why is the Temple in Jerusalem out as a location I have to go to worship God? Because Jesus Christ is the final sacrifice, now that the sacrifice has been made we are the temple. And the Holy Spirit indwells us. We are the holy of holies. So we don't have to a specific location to worship, wherever we go the temple is with us and the Holy Spirit is with us because we are the temple and He indwells us. So the issue is not location, location, location, the issue now is wherever you are worship Him in spirit and in truth. What does this mean? In the Greek it's two nouns governed by one

preposition, in spirit and truth. This means Jesus is describing one way of worship by way of two inseparable things, spirit and truth. In other words, it could be translated as “truly spiritual.” What does it mean to worship God in a truly spiritual way? It means that in every way our worship is spiritual. As to source we are spiritual beings, born of God and out of our born of God spirits we worship God. As to the mediator it goes through Jesus Christ, a spiritual mediator. As to object our worship is directed to God who is a spirit being. As to subject, worship involves spiritual matters. So to reflect the original more exactly we worship in a “truly spiritual” manner. Where you are is irrelevant to the issue.

Furthermore, as our statement says, “Scripture teaches no distinction in the Church between clergy and laity, all saints being equal in their privilege of worship (Gal. 3:28),” turn to Gal 3:28. Gal 3:28 isn’t really about worship per se, worship being appreciation for God, but what it does show is that so far as believer priests there is no distinction between those who are saved. We all come to Him exactly same way, nobody has a special route to God, Jews don’t have a special route through being the physical descendants of Abraham, they don’t have a special in through circumcision, justification is always by grace through faith in both the testaments.

Now as you can see in verse 24 the Mosaic Law was not a way of justification, it was a “tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. 25And now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.” That is, we’re not under the Mosaic Law as a way of sanctification. Why? Two explanations, verse 26, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.” And two, verse 27, “For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” So when we come to verse 28, understand, the context is justification by faith and sanctification by faith, there’s no privileges in these departments, we are all justified and sanctified in the identical way, by grace through faith. In verse 28 he lays this out very straightforwardly, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Racially there is no distinction, whether Jew or Greek; socially there is no distinction, whether slave or free; and sexually there is no distinction, whether you are male or female. So the point of Gal 3:28 is that none of us have a superior status before God because of our racial makeup, our social

status or our sexual makeup. Those things are irrelevant before God as far as our status before Him is concerned.

Now the fact we all share equal status before Him does not mean that there are no distinctions in role. Gal 3:28 is the favorite verse of every liberal theology to do away with all kinds of distinctions when the text is saying there are no distinctions as far as status before God. But the liberal wants to wipe away all distinctions. And if that were the case then wives wouldn't have to be subordinate to husbands, children wouldn't have to be subordinate to parents, employees wouldn't have to be subordinate to employers and the congregation wouldn't have to be subordinate to the leadership. Yet the Scriptures teach all these subordinations. So how do we understand that there are no distinctions and yet there are distinctions? We understand that in terms of spiritual status before God there are no distinctions but when it comes to roles there are distinctions.

Now it's important when we use the word subordination that we do not attach to that term the idea of inferiority. Subordination does not mean inferiority or imply it. Subordination means there is a hierarchy in rank or role, not status. We all share the same status in Christ, but as far as our rank or role God has revealed an order and the reason He has done this is because, number one, it reflects the relationship of the Father and the Son in the Trinity. The Father is the head of the Son even though the Son is equally God and the man is the head of the woman even though women are equally human. And not only is this intrinsic to the Godhead but it's for the sake of order and peace in marriage, family, the workplace and the church. That way there can be growth, there can be edification, there can be love.

So then, what we mean by this statement is that I, when it comes to worship and spiritual privileges, don't have any special status with God greater than you, I am a saint like you are a saint, I am justified like you are justified, I don't have any special privileges or access to God that you don't have. In the spiritual department we all share equally the same privileges and access to God, that's the priesthood of all believers. Now as far as leadership is concerned, you have been asked by God in Scripture to submit to me and obey my leadership, to follow my lead that it may go well with you.

So there are distinctions in role and let us come to the last portion of the statement, a portion that has had to be put in the doctrinal statement because of recent cultural trends in the West excepting that women are forbidden in Scripture to preach and teach the Word to men or exercise authority over men (1 Tim. 2:11-15). Again, this is just looking at role, this is not looking at spiritual status before God, it is referring to a role in the formal assembly. So let's turn to this hot potato. And the reason this is a hot potato is because people are sinners. That's all it is. They don't like God's authority. It's not like the text is unclear. It's that they don't want this text to apply to them, they want an out. That's God's way of putting it. The academic way the argument is stated is that 1 Timothy is an *ad hoc* letter written by Paul to deal with an isolated issue at Ephesus where Timothy was pastoring. Therefore the teaching is isolated to that group of people. However, most of the NT epistles are written as *ad hoc* letters to address a particular problem at a location. Does that mean that the teachings in those letters are not normative for us? Not at all. And in this letter Paul states in 1 Tim 3:14-15 that one of the reasons Paul wrote this letter was to outline how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God (1 Tim 3:14-15). Now is that only for the Church at Ephesus? Or does it apply to all Churches? I think it clearly refers to all churches.

Now in this letter he addresses several groups. In 2:8 he addresses the men of the Church saying, "I want the men in every place to pray," and that ought to hit every man between the horns, "I want the men to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension." Then he turns to the women in the Church in verse 9, and he talks about the proper way to adorn themselves, not externally but internally, the external is a distraction from what's really important, it's not saying don't keep yourself up, it's just saying focus on the internal, and that ought to hit all women between the horns. Then in verse 11, "A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.<sup>12</sup> And I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet." Now the people that love Gal 3:28 say this doesn't apply now but I take it this is how the women are to conduct themselves in the household of God, meaning the formal assembly and these instructions are clear. Some say of course they were instructions just given for cultural reasons and Jesus and Paul lived in a bigoted patriarchal culture so this can't be transferred to our culture because we've progressed beyond that, now we've been enlightened and we know better. But the funny thing is Paul

doesn't base this instruction on cultural issues, in verse 13 he bases it on the order of creation, "For it was Adam who was first created, *and* then Eve." Then he bases it on the Fall, verse 14, "And *it was* not Adam *who* was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression." Then he goes on to declare the sphere where a woman will really grow spiritually, not teaching and exercising authority over men in the formal assembly but in the home raising children. Verse 15, "But *women* will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint." Now we won't go through all the interpretations of verse 15, except to say the best interpretation is that the primary spiritual growth ground of women is in the sphere of the home; they birth children and they raise children and this is their spiritual training ground, this is where a woman does most of her spiritual growth, in the home raising brats, which is the reason 99% of the time Christian women don't want to be in the home, they don't like the brats so they try to get outside the home when the Scriptures seem to be saying that's the primary training ground for women, the major thing they should do, but one thing women can't do is verse 12, "teach or exercise authority over a man." Now if there is a denomination that is ordaining women to teach in their churches you decide whether that is proper? You are wise enough to know what is proper. And if you ask me I have no hesitancy in saying they have gone the path of Jezebel and if someone is in one of those denominations I would encourage you to get out now, to run the other way as fast as you can because you are not going to turn them around, you are not going to change them, you are not going to save them from sinking, the organization is already sunk and if you're not off the ship already you better get off and get back to the surface to get a breath of air or you're going to go down with them. So I repeat, if your church has a woman preacher, a woman leading men it is over, leave, flee, run for your life. That issue is a slippery slope issue and you are involved in a spiritually apostate organization. There is no argument for staying, no valid reason, God wants you to leave. If you say why? God says verse 13, "For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve." So to stay is a denial the order of God's creative activity. If you say why again, God will say verse 14, "And it was not Adam who was deceived but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression." So to stay is to deny the historicity of the Fall. You cannot stay for these theological reasons, God says so and you better obey or you're rushing headlong into a spiritual disaster. Now some people will say, why are you being so hard on the women. I'll say, I'm not being hard on the women,

God said this, God has a program for the spiritual growth of women and if you don't like that problem that's your problem, take it up with Him. But I'm not willing to deny Him because I fear Him. You, I can handle, God, I don't want to come under His discipline. Now someone will say, but women are just as smart as men and in many cases smarter so why can't they teach in the formal congregation. I agree but that's not the issue. Smarts isn't the issue at all, what is the issue is what God says and nobody is as smart as Him, that I guarantee you. And so that's that.

So point 9, we are all believer priests, we all share equal status before God, we do not need to go to an earthly priest as OT believers did, when Christ came He was both priest and sacrifice, offering Himself for the sins of the whole world and He has made us a priesthood and we go straight to the throne of grace to worship Him in a truly spiritual way. As far as roles are concerned, there are distinctions between men and women in the leadership of the formal assembly and God has, for reasons related to design in creation and the fall, stated that men should occupy positions of leadership in governing Christ's church.

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