

THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

(Part 19 – series on Baptist Distinctives)

TEXT: John 20:22,23; Matthew 23:8,9

INTRODUCTION: As Baptists, we share with historic Protestants in repudiating the Roman Catholic heresies associated with the man-made hierarchy of a human priesthood. There is only *“one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”* (1 Tim. 2:5). It is wicked presumption and blasphemy for any other **man** to claim to forgive sins. The doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers,” rightly understood, does not contradict Christ’s unique prerogative to forgive sins.

Let us examine and refute from Scripture the heresies arising from the abuse of this blessed doctrine. Tradition must not trump the Word of God.

OUTLINE: What are these disastrous Roman Catholic heresies?

- I. **The Meaning of New Testament Priesthood**
- II. **The Qualifications of a New Testament Priest**
- III. **The Responsibilities of a Believer-Priest**
- IV. **The Repudiation of Unscriptural Hierarchy**
 - A. The two extremes
 1. The error and doctrine of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6,15)
 2. Laodicean rule, or “rule of the people” (Rev. 3:14-20)
 - B. The disastrous results
 1. Confession to human priest
 2. Priestly absolution (forgiveness)
 3. Transubstantiation
 4. The “infallibility” of the Pope (Matt. 23:8,9)
 - C. The biblical view of ordination
- V. **The Implications of New Testament Priesthood**

CONCLUSION: Man shows his Satanic-inspired fallen nature when he usurps the place of God. It was Lucifer who exalted Himself against the Most High in Isaiah 14. Only God can forgive sins. Only Christ, the Living Word, and the Bible, the written Word, are infallible. No human priest can conjure up the actual presence of Christ by his ritualistic incantations over perishable food! May the Lord help us to accord Christ His rightful place and lovingly reach out to those caught up in these deadly errors.

