

1 Peter 2:4–10

<sup>4</sup> Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,

<sup>5</sup> you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, “Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, “The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,”

<sup>8</sup> and “A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense.” They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

<sup>10</sup> who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

*"The Local Church, Part 3"*

*1 Peter 2:5-10*

INTRO:

We are exploring called the church. The last time we studied this subject we learned that the local church is “*God’s New Covenant Temple*.” When we are come together as His people in the name of our Savior for worship, He is right here with us in a special way. Thus when we worship we should come prepared to come into His special presence. We must come with our hearts freshly cleansed from the sinful things of the world and with our minds tuned in that we might worship the Lord of Glory. I hope we have done that today.

We come in our series to a second picture the Lord of Glory paints to show us who we are as the church of the living God. This picture fits nicely with the last picture. We find this picture in **1 Peter 2:5-10**. Our study will revolve around two focal points:

***I. What We Are As a Priesthood***

***II. How We Are To Practice Our Priesthood***

## ***I. What We Are As a Priesthood***

A. Twice in the paragraph before us, the Lord tells us that we the redeemed people of God, His church, are a priesthood. In **verse 5** we read, ***“You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”***

Again in **verse 9** we read, ***“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”***

1. When we gather together in the worship of the local church. We are uniquely in His presence. He is here as we discovered last time.

2. What are we to do when we are gathered together as God's church in the practice of worship? We are to be a priesthood. We are in the language of our text ***“to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”***

B. What does this mean? First, we need to understand what a priest is and does. **Hebrews 5:1** ***“For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.”***

1. First, this text explains the function of the Aaronic priesthood. They were men chosen by God to function in ***“the things pertaining to God.”*** The priest's primary focus was God. The Priest did what he did for men to advance their relationship with God. What the priest did, helped man, but it had to please God or it was not acceptable.

2. The second, the priest's purpose is to bring offerings and sacrifices to God! A priest is not a priest without a sacrifice!

3. Although the issue in the sacrifices of the Aaronic priesthood dealt with sin, the sacrifices of the New Covenant priesthood are not to do with sin. Sin was settled through our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who put away our sin.

**Hebrews 9:24-27** ***“For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another; He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”***

In our innate desire to be religious, we want to think that we can do something to obtain our redemption. While we are to act as believer priests in the local church, we are not involved in sacrifices that have anything to do with the expiation of our sin.

## ***II. How We Are To Practice Our Priesthood***

A. If we are believer priests, and we are to focus on God, and we are to function in bringing sacrifices to God, what kind of sacrifices are we to bring as we assemble together in worship of the living God?

1. **1 Peter 2:5** ***“You also. . . are . . . a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”***

We carry out our priesthood through the blessings that we have in Christ Jesus. To understand the impact that we are supposed to feel when we read these words we must remember that the privilege of offering sacrifices to God was not given to everyone in the Old Testament. Only a select few had that privilege.

Remember a King named Uzziah? In **2 Chronicles 26** we read,

***“But when Uzziah was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the LORD his God by entering the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.”***

God struck the king with leprosy, because he entered into a place that he did not belong. The King, himself, could not approach God to offer even incense to Him. Only a priest could.

2. We, who are blood bought sinners, have the unspeakable privilege in the Lord Jesus Christ to make offering of spiritual sacrifices to God. Our offering is acceptable because of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus.

B. What are these sacrifices we bring? Let us look at a brief list.

1. The first and foremost offering we bring as believer priests is ourselves.

**Romans 12:1-2** ***“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”***

What does this mean? It means when we come into this place to worship, the first sacrifice that we need to offer to God is everything that we are. We are to give it to Him with no strings attached. We are to recognize that before Him we have no rights. We are to give it all to Him. I have a friend who every Sunday morning before he gets dressed for the morning worship goes for a walk and

offers himself to God as a living sacrifice to be consumed as God sees fit. Do we do that?

2. Second, we should offer Him the sacrifice of praise.

**Hebrews 13:15** *“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”*

We lift our voices and our hearts up in the singing of the songs of praise to Him. Let us enter into praise with our hearts and our mouths to God.

3. Third, we are to offer the sacrifice of a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart.

**Psalms 51:16-17** *“For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart; These, O God, You will not despise.”*

What is a broken and contrite heart? It is an awareness of our sin. This compels us to confess our sin to God. We have sinned and we are not happy about it. Confession is serious business. If when we come together, we come with our sins confessed, our hearts broken in sorrow over our sin, God is pleased and glorified in us.

4. Finally, we are to offer up our substance to God.

**Philippians 4:18** *“Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.”*

Here Paul is telling us that the gift that they gave was a sacrifice well pleasing to God. Not only are special gifts to missionaries a sacrificial offering to God, the tithes and offerings we give every week to the local church are an offering to God. In a real sense the offering is our worship in giving. It is because as we give our tithe and offerings to God, we do it as an act of worship, as a sacrifice as New Testament believer priests.

How are we doing as the Lord's New Covenant Priests?

Are you and I doing these things? What is the quality of our service as New Testament Believer Priests? Do we offer up our entire beings as sacrifices, living, holy, well pleasing to God? Are we willing to say to our Lord, *“Here, Lord, is my body, my life. It is a sacrifice to You. It is yours. Consume it in any way that you choose.”*

Do we offer the sacrifice of praise to God? Is it real praise or substitute religious activity?

Do we offer the sacrifice of a broken and a contrite spirit? Do we often confess our sins before God and let Him rule in our lives.

Do we offer our sacrifice of our substance to Him? Are we aware that we are bringing joy to His heart when we do these things? Let us be faithful believer priests in His church.

Hymn #183 *Beneath the Cross of Jesus*