

Our Priestly Duties

Scripture Reading:
1 Peter 2:4-10

Who are priests?

Depends on who you ask!

- Someone during the days of the Old Testament?
- A member of the Catholic church?
- What does God's word say regarding the Lord's church?
- It was prophesied that all (Jew & Gentile) who would come to God would be considered "priests of the Lord" and "ministers of our God".

Isaiah 61:1-6

Who are priests today?

1 Peter 2:4-10, "And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, **you also**, as living stones, *are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ... But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession...*"

Who are priests today?

Rev. 1:5-6, "To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, and **He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father**; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Thus we see that all who have been forgiven of their sins, through blood of Christ and their obedience to the gospel, are priests.

Who are priests today?

No child of God has to "**draw near**" to God through another designated priest. Cf., **Lev. 21:17-21; Heb. 10:19-25; 4:14-16**

The New Testament is silent of a clergy – laity distinction that we see in the OT or in Catholicism. Note **Phil. 1:1**

Though Christ has put an end to the Levitical priesthood (**Heb. 7:22-25; Col. 2:14-17**)...

...It is intended that we learn about some of the aspects of the O.T. priesthood that serve as a shadow of our priesthood today. **Heb. 10:1; 8:3-5.**

The Old Testament

“shadow”...

- Regarding the consecration of priests...
 - Priests are responsible for consecrating themselves. **Ex. 19:22; 28:1-4; 28:40-29:9**
 - We also must be consecrated for service as a priest. **1 Peter 2:9; Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Tim. 2:21** – We must be clothed with Christ. **Gal. 3:27; Rev. 7:9-14**

The Old Testament

“shadow”...

- Regarding the sacrifices to be offered...
 - One of the priest’s primary functions was to offer sacrifices unto God. **Lev. 1:1-9**
 - We are to offer sacrifices of a different nature to God.
 - They include...

As Priests today, we offer sacrifices of...

- **Our bodies** – **Rom. 12:1-2; Gal. 5:19-21**
- **Our faithfulness** – **Phil. 2:17**
 - Our faith is one of our “*spiritual sacrifices*” (**1 Peter 2:5**).
- **Our support for the preaching of the gospel** - **Phil. 4:18**
- **Our love and concern for others** – **Eph. 5:2; Heb. 13:16**
- **Our praise and thanksgiving**; that is, **our worship** – **Heb. 13:15**

Consequences of a failed priesthood:

The responsibility for the apostasy of Israel was largely laid at the feet of the OT priests & prophets. **Jer. 5:30-31; 6:13-14; 23:11.**

Their failure included some of the “*weightier matters*” that they were responsible for (**Matt. 23:23**).

We must learn from their mistakes!

Their sins are sins which will prevent us from being approved by God & will also precipitate the apostasy of the Lord’s

Malachi 2:1-8, “My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and **I gave them to him as an object of reverence**; so **he revered Me and stood in awe of My name**. **6 True instruction was in his mouth** and unrighteousness was not found on his lips; he **walked with Me in peace and uprightness**, and **he turned many back from iniquity**. **7 For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth**; for **he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts**. **8** But as for you, you have turned aside from the way; **you have caused many to stumble by the instruction**; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi,” says the LORD of hosts.”

Even after their return from captivity, the OT priests continued to fail to fulfill their God-given duty which we read of in Malachi chapter 2 where the prophet contrasts what the original charge to God’s priests was, with what they were – and weren’t.

What are our priestly duties? Mal.

Ch. 2

1. Spiritual Stewardship –

- Of God's message.
 - Vs. 5 "*My covenant...I gave them to him as an object of reverence...*"
- And applying it to the souls in their charge.
 - Vs. 7 "*Men should seek instruction from his mouth*"
 - Vs. 8 "*You have caused many to stumble by the instruction*"

What are the responsibilities of

Paul understood this stewardship...

Do we?

(1 ~~X~~or. 9:16-18; ~~X~~ol.1:25)

- 5) Don't twist it, distort it or in any way change it. **Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Peter 3:16**
- 6) Give it reverence. **1 Thess. 2:13**
- 7) Become teachers of it. **Heb. 5:12-14**

What are our priestly duties? Mal.

Ch. 2

2. Spiritual Reverence –

- Vs. 5, "*He revered me and stood in awe of My name*"
- Reverence must precede our obedience to Him. **Eccl. 12:13; Heb. 11:7**
- Such a heart is to govern our worship unto Him. **Ps. 2:11-12**
- Mindless repetition doesn't count! **Isaiah 29:13**
- Where do we learn to revere God? **Ps 119:38,**
"Establish Thy word to Thy servant, as that which produces reverence for Thee." (lit., "which is for the fear of You")

What are our priestly duties? Mal.

Ch. 2

2. Spiritual Reverence –

- It's based on who He is and what He has done for us. **Heb 12:28-29**
 –As priests we are accountable for reverence in our worship unto God.
- Do we "revere" God's name?
- "Our God Is An Awesome God"

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Ch. 2

3. Spiritual Instruction – "For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts" Vs. 6-7

- A priest is not to simply proclaim what they want to hear. **2 Tim. 4:1-3**
 - "Peace, peace when there is no peace" **Jer. 6:13-15**
- Not carrying a message which God did not send. **Jer. 23:16-22**

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3. Spiritual Instruction – "For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge...the messenger of the LORD of hosts" Vs. 6-7

- Rather, we are to seek to turn the sinner from the error of his ways. **James 5:19-20**
- We also will be rejected as God's priest today if we don't know His word. **Hosea 4:6**
- Will we "*defend the faith*"? **Jude 3**
- Will we "correct those who are in opposition"? **2 Tim. 2:24-26**

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4. Spiritual Integrity - Walk the talk – vs. 6 & 8– “walked with Me in peace and uprightness” rather than “causing many to stumble by the instruction” they gave.

- God expects His priests to live lives consistent with the message they carry.
- Walking “with God” – Gen. 6:9,
- David’s charge to Solomon – 1 Kings 2:1-4

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4. Spiritual Integrity - vs. 6 & 8– “walked with Me in peace and uprightness”- “causing many to stumble by the instruction” they gave.

- Be an example - Don’t cause others to stumble–. Vs. 8. – **Luke 17:1-2; 1 Cor. 8:13**
- **Ezra 7:10**, “study...practice...teach”
- No hypocrisy – **Luke 12:1; Matt. 7:5; Matt. 23:1-5**; “they say and do not” – **Rom. 2:1-3**

• 1 Peter 2:1-2:

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1. **Spiritual Stewardship** - Be a steward of God’s message. Vs. 5 “My covenant...I gave them to him as an object of reverence...”
2. **Spiritual Reverence** – “He revered me and stood in awe of My name” Vs. 5
3. **Spiritual Instruction** – “For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts” Vs. 6-7
4. **Spiritual Integrity** - Walk the talk – vs. 6 & 8– “walked with Me in peace and uprightness” rather than “causing many to stumble by the instruction” they gave.

What if you’re not yet a priest of the most high God?

- Remember **Rev. 1:5-6**, “To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, and **He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father**; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”
- Have you had your sins washed by the blood of Christ?