

THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

(Part 21 – series on Baptist Distinctives)

TEXT: 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Galatians 3:26-28

INTRODUCTION: Just as there are many **applications** of scriptural truth, so there are many **implications** of the doctrines that collectively make up our distinctiveness as Baptists. That is the reason for much overlapping in any discussion of Baptist distinctives. For example, a true understanding of the biblical basis for our insisting on a regenerate church membership definitely implies that baptism should be for believers only – another Baptist distinctive! Since baptism is the door to local church membership, and only genuine believers should be added to the church, then it follows logically that only intelligent believers should be baptized. Babies and very young children do not know what they are doing, and cannot savingly believe on Christ. Therefore they should not be baptized.

Hardly anyone would deny the priesthood of believers. But not all understand how this principle is to be applied and how it relates to other equally valid doctrinal priorities. It is important to understand that the priesthood of believers has more to do with our **service** than with our **status** as Christians.

OUTLINE: What are the **implications** of the doctrine of a New Testament priesthood?

(V. The Implications of a New Testament Priesthood)

A. Congregational polity

1. Congregational government is needed if the church is to indeed be the “pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15; Phil. 1:27; Acts 15:22)
2. Congregational government is necessary to effectively enforce church discipline (1 Cor. 5:4; 2 Cor. 2:7; Matt. 18:15-17).

B. Unified mission

1. In fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19,20)
2. In edifying the body (Eph. 4:16)

C. Related matters, cautions

1. Soul competency vs. “right of private interpretation”
2. Soul liberty

CONCLUSION: The priesthood of all believers is not only a spiritual privilege – it is a moral obligation and a daily calling. Every born-again child of God belongs to this “royal priesthood.” His or her prayers and praises can be as acceptable to God as those of the most eminent preacher or gifted saint. The fact that we have been made “*kings and priests unto God*” is not a call to sacerdotalism or mediation, but a call to ministry and service. Shall we not bend our heads every morning to seek the consecration and anointing that comes from above to fit us for such noble employment?

