

1 Peter 2:5–10

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.”

⁷ 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,”

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

⁹ 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;

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

"New Covenant Priesthood"

1 Peter 2:5-10

INTRO:

We are exploring this thing that we see in the pages of God's Word called the local church. We come in our series to a picture of the local church the Lord of Glory painted for us in His Word. This word picture is designed to show us who we are as the gathered people of God. We find this picture in **1 Peter 2:5-10**.

I. WHAT WE ARE AS A PRIESTHOOD

II. HOW WE ARE TO PRACTICE OUR PRIESTHOOD

I. WHAT WE ARE AS A PRIESTHOOD

“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. 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.’ 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,' and 'A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense.' They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, [so] that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy." (1 Peter 2:5–10)

A. Twice in the paragraph before us, the Lord told 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, in a real sense we gather in the **naos** of God. We are uniquely in His presence. He is here.
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 is it exactly that the Biblically constituted priests of the living God do as we are gathered together in worship? To answer this question, let us consider a passage found in **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. The purpose of this text is to explain the function of the Aaronic priesthood. The Aaronic priests were men chosen by God to function in *"the things pertaining to God."* The primary focus of the priest was God. He 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 thing we observe about the function of the Biblically constituted priest is that his purpose is to bring offerings and sacrifices to God! A priest is not a priest without a sacrifice!

3. It is important to observe that although the issue in the sacrifices of the Aaronic priesthood had to do with sin, the sacrifices of the New Covenant priesthood are not to do with sin, because our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ took away our sin. Allow me to dwell upon this a moment.

Hebrews 9:24-28 *“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. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to put away the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.”*

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. R. C. Sproul made an observation that I have been thinking long and hard about lately. He wrote, *“All worship is around sacrifice. The problem today is that we have lost the sacrificial aspect of worship.”*

2. The first expression of the sacrificial aspect of our worship is found in our text in **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 we have in Christ Jesus. To understand the impact we are supposed to feel when we read these words, we must remember 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.

3. Here is the blessing. 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 are to bring? Let me just give you a brief list.

1. The first and foremost offering that we bring as believer priests is found in **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.”*

First we are to offer ourselves, the sum total of all that we are to Him! This means that when we come into this place to worship, the first sacrifice that we need to offer to God is everything that we are.

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

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

It is a result of our awareness of our sin. It is the end result of our confessing to God our sin. Confession is serious business.

4. 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 the Philippians gave was a sacrifice well pleasing to God. Not only are special gifts to missionaries a sacrificial offering to God. The tithe which we give every week to God for the local church is also a spiritual sacrifice to God. In a real sense the offering is our worship in giving.

What Do We Do With All Of This?

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 bold enough to do what my friend does every Lord's Day morning?

“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 freshly 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 #379 *Take My Life and Let It Be*