

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

Our Privileges 1 Peter 2:4-10 Part Two

We are looking at **1 Peter 2:4-10**. In this section of scripture Peter outlines for us our many spiritual privileges. In **1 Peter 1:1-12** we had considered “THE GREATNESS OF OUR SALVATION.” In **1 Peter 1:13-23** we had considered “Our proper response to God, to others, and even ourselves in light of the greatness of our salvation. But here in **1 Peter 2:4-10** we are considering our spiritual privileges.

Most Christians think of duty more than privileges. We feel more the pressure of our spiritual duty than the joy of our privilege. This is not only unfortunate but it is unhealthy. For us to perform our duty cheerfully with an attitude of gratitude we need to have a constant abiding sense of our privilege.

Let us again look at what we have already considered. The first privilege that we considered was found in **VV. 4-5** “**And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, (5) you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house.**” We learned last week when we come to Christ for salvation we are united with Him and everything that is true of Him becomes true of us. If Christ is a “living stone” then we become “living stones in Christ.” And as living stones we are being built up in a “spiritual house” or in other words the very habitation of God. **THIS MORNING WE WILL CONTINUE TO EXAMINE OTHER PRIVILEGES THAT ARE OURS IN CHRIST. WE NOT ONLY ENJOY UNION BUT WE ENJOY.**

ACCESS

Vast multitudes of people do not know God. Vast multitudes of people are far off from God. But this is not true of the Christian. For every true believer we have the privilege of access to the Lord of Glory.

Look at **V. 5** “**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.**” In Christ Jesus not only do we learn that we become the temple of God, but we also become priests within that temple.

This is an incredible privilege. In the O.T. when anyone other than a priest would presume to take on the privileges of a priest without the office of a priest he was severely punished.

Do you remember what happened to Korah and his cohorts when then sought to enter the priestly realm in **Numbers 16**. In **Numbers 16:3** we see them challenging Moses and the special position given to the Aaronic priesthood. It says, “**And they assembled together against Moses and Aaron, and said to the, “You have gone far enough, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?”**” They in effect felt they had the right to function as priests.

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

What happened? He challenged them to come on the next day to offer up incense before the Lord and Aaron would do the same. And the Lord would make his will clear as to who was holy or who was not in respect to the priestly functions. After this was done do you remember the end of this story? The earth opened up and swallowed them.

Another well known incident occurring hundreds of years of this event involved Saul in **1 Sam. 13:8-14**. Saul for what he thought were very good reasons decided to offer up burnt offerings at Gilgal. Immediately after having done this Samuel came and confronted him telling him how foolishly he had acted. And Samuel acting as the Lord's prophet announced his judgment of Saul and the Lord's intention of removing his rule and the rule of his family over the nation of Israel.

Some of you might remember the story of King Uzziah. **2 Chronicles** reveals him as one of the most energetic and successful kings of Judah. However, in approximately 750 BC Uzziah made a terrible mistake he entered the temple of the Lord and sought to perform the activities of a priest. **2 Chronicles 26:16-18** **“But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the Lord his God, for he entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense. (17) then Azariah the priest entered after him and with him eighty priests of the Lord, valiant men. (18) They opposed Uzziah the king and said to him, “It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful, and will have no honor from the Lord God.” (19) But Uzziah, with a censor in his hand for burning incense, was enraged; and while he was enraged with the priests, the leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, beside the altar of incense.”** He remained a leper until the day of his death.

Being recognized as the Lord priest was an incredible privilege that rested in the hands of very few in the O.T. This has dramatically changed in Christ. Today all true born again believers are priests and we have ACCESS into His presence. As priests **Heb. 4:16** tells us that we can **“draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.**

But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Beyond access there are other thoughts related to the priesthood that can help us to appreciate even further this privileged position.

WHAT THE PRIESTS WERE

1. THEY WERE CHOSEN OF GOD - In **Ex. 28:1** it says, **“Then bring near to yourself Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister as priest to Me. Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.”** Notice no one volunteered for the priesthood. There were no nominations taken from the floor or even a vote taken. God sovereignly chose the priests. To be a priest is an elect privilege. And this is exactly what we see is true concerning ourselves in **John 15:16** **“You have not chosen me but I have chosen you, and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit...”**

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

Note: You might think that God would select the most holy Israelites to be His priests but this is not so. From what tribe were the priests chosen? From the tribe of Levi. Aaron was a Levite and it was Aaron and his sons who were chosen to be priests and the remaining Levites assisted them in their priestly functions. This is clear from **Num. 16:8-11**. So what do we know about the tribe of Levi? Let us turn in our Bibles and consider a little history **Gen. 49:5** **“Simeon and Levi are brothers; their swords are implements of violence.”** We first of all learn that the father of the tribe of Levi, this priestly tribe was a violent man. Then the Lord elaborates on their violence in **V. 6** **“Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly; Because in their anger they slew men, and in their self-will they lamed oxen.”** These were violent men. Levi was a violent man. And the Lord cursed him and his children. Look at **V. 7** **“Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; and their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.”** The point here is that Levi and his sons were cursed and yet it is this very tribe which the Lord chose His priests. Why? The Lord is taking opportunity to point for us the weakness of all men. Listen to **Heb. 5:1-4** **“For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; (2) he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness; (3) and because of it he is obligate to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself. (4) and no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God.”** No one has cause for boasting before the Lord and this includes the priests. Just as the priests of old were called to their office we have also been called but let us remember **1 Cor. 1:26** **“For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong (28) and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, (29) that no man should boast before God.....”** We are looking at priests those individuals who had been given access to God and we clearly see that they were chosen and we have also been chosen.

2) THEY WERE CLEANSSED FROM SIN.

At the inauguration of the Aaronic priesthood we see the priests were to be washed. In **Lev. 8:6** it says, **“then Moses had Aaron and his sons come near, and washed them with water.”** Clearly this action was speaking a need on the part of the priests to be cleansed. A great deal more information was given concerning this inauguration in **VV. 7-17** but again the importance of cleansing again comes very much to the forefront beginning with **V. 18** **“Then he presented the ram of the burnt offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. (19) And Moses slaughtered it and sprinkled the blood around on the altar. (20) When he had cut the ram into its pieces, Moses offered up the head and the pieces and the suet in smoke. (21) After he had washed the entrails and the legs with water, Moses offered up the whole ram in smoke on the altar. It was a burnt offering for a soothing aroma; it was an offering by fire to the Lord, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. (22) Then he presented the second ram, the ram of ordination; and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. (23) And Moses slaughtered it and took some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron’s right ear, and the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.**

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

(24) He also had Aaron’s sons come near; and Moses put some of the blood on the lobe of their right ear, and on the thumb of their right hand, and on the big toe of their right foot. Moses then sprinkled the rest of the blood around on the altar.” What is this all about? **WE CANNOT ENTER THE PRIESTHOOD UNTIL WE HAVE BEEN WASHED, UNTIL WE HAVE BEEN CLEANSED FROM TOP TO BOTTOM.**

We could not be called priests unless we also have been cleansed from top to bottom. You hopefully remember when Jesus was washing the disciples feet when he came to Peter in **John 13:8** **“Peter said to Him, “never shall you wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” (9) Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.”**

3) THEY WERE ANOINTED FOR SERVICE

Continuing to examine **Lev. 8** and the inauguration of the priesthood we find that the priests were anointed for service.....**Lev. 8:12 “Then he (Moses) poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron’s head and anointed him, to consecrate him.”** We another anointing in **V.30 “So Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which was on the altar, and sprinkled it on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he consecrated Aaron, his garments and his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.”** What is the anointing? It was the identification that the power and presence of God would rest on the priest. It symbolized God the Spirit.

Haven’t we also been anointed with the Holy Spirit? In **I John 2:20** it says, **“But you have an anointing from the Holy One.... “** Then if we go down to **V. 27** it says, **“And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you.”** Have we received an anointing? Yes, we have received the anointing of the Holy Spirit. And through the Spirit we have to the Lord and His power. You will remember **Acts 1:8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit[has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”** Just as the priests were set apart and able to do things that others could not do because of this anointing so are we ourselves.

4) WE WERE ORDAINED UNTO OBEDIENCE.

Let us go to **Lev. 10**. Aaron and his sons had just been inaugurated into the priesthood. And as they approach their first priestly functions we read the following in **V. 1..... “Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective pans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord which He had not commanded them. (2) And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed the, and they died before the Lord.”**

Talking about going from a high to a low this really was it. These priests had been called, cleansed and anointed and yet as they embarked on the road of priestly service fire comes down and consumes them. It appears from verse 2 that Aaron wanted to protest but, he kept silent. Look at **V. 3 “Then Moses said to Aaron, “It is what the Lord spoke, saying, “By those who come near Me I will be treated s holy, and before all the people I will be honored” so Aaron kept silent.”**

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

They had been ordained to obedience but they had messed up. What was the strange fire? It might be that Nadab and Abihu did not go to the brazen altar to get their fire as commanded in **Lev. 16:12**. Or perhaps the fire was offered using the wrong incense as was commanded in **Ex. 30:34-38**. Or perhaps it might have been offered at the wrong time as was spelled out in **Ex. 30:7**. A strong message was sent to the priests. They had been ordained to obedience and needed to take to task seriously.

We also to carry out our priestly function in obedience. You will **1 Pet. 1:14-15** “**As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, (15) but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior.**”

CONCLUSION

When we become a Christian we not only have the privilege of being united with Christ but we also have the privilege as His priests to come boldly into His presence. Remembering that as His priests we have been called, cleansed, anointed, and ordained to obedience.