

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

Our Privileges 1 Peter 2:4-10 Part Three

We are continuing in our study of **1 Pet. 2:4-10**. In this section of Scripture we are examining our spiritual privileges.

When we come to Christ for salvation, when we come to Him and place our faith in Him we become a part of God's family and we are showered with blessings. **Ps. 86:5** says, **“For Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in lovingkindness to all who call upon Thee.”** This is the truth. This is what I have experienced. This is what you will experience if you would only come to Him. And this is what you will continue to experience as you abide in Him.

Ps. 34:8 says, **“O taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!!”** If you struggle with the reality of what I have just shared consider some of the the privileges the Lord showers us with even as we first come to Him in **1 Pet. 2:4-10**.

(1) UNION - When we come to Christ by faith we become united with Him (**Romans 6:1-5**). Because we are united with Him everything that is true of Him becomes true of us. We see this clearly demonstrated in **1 Pet. 2:4-5** **“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 a spiritual house.”** Because we are united with Christ and Christ is a living stone then we become living stones in Him. And as living stones we are being built up into a **“spiritual house”** or in other words we become the very habitation of God. Our second privilege we see that we enjoy as Christians in **1 Peter 2:4-10** is ACCESS.

(2) ACCESS - When we come to Christ and are joined to Him not only do we become **“Living stones in a spiritual house”** but we also become priests. Look with me at **V. 5** again, **“You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood...”** As priests we have the privilege of access to God and the opportunity to offer us spiritual sacrifices. In an attempt to help us to appreciate this privilege fully we have spent some time beginning to examine the priesthood. Last week we looked at certain things that helps us to understand WHO THE PRIESTS WERE!

- A) They were chosen of God **Ex. 28:1 (John 15:6)**
- B) They were cleansed from sin **Lev. 8:6 (John 13:8)**
- C) They were anointed for service **Lev. 8:18 (I John 2:20,27)**
- D) They were ordained unto obedience **Lev. 10:1-3 (1 Pet. 1:14,15)**

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This morning we will continue to examine the O.T. priesthood, but this time rather than looking at WHO THE PRIESTS WERE this is we will be looking at what THE PRIESTS DID.

Let us look again at V. 5 **“You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”** The primary responsibility of Old Testament priests was to offer up sacrifices. When Jesus Christ came into the world and offered himself up as God’s perfect sacrifice for sin all animal sacrifices were no longer necessary. However as God’s priests in Christ we as Christians still have a priestly function to perform. Not the offering up of animal sacrifices but rather **“spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ”**. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES THAT THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST IS SEEN AS MAKING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT? WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES THAT WE AS NEW TESTAMENT PRIESTS SHOULD EXPECT TO SEE IN OUR LIVES?

1) PRESENTATION OF OUR BODIES (ROMANS 12:1 **“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”**) We have as the Lord’s priests the privilege, in light of all that the Lord has done for us, to offer up our bodies as spiritual sacrifices to the Lord.

To offer up our bodies involves surrendering all that we are to the Lord’s control. We are in essence doing exactly what Christ did in giving up His body up on the cross of Calvary (Phil. 2:5-8).

When we die to ourselves in this way we become Spirit filled. Or in other words the Spirit is in control of our lives. We are then able to **“offer up spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God.”** Without dying to ourselves in this way we will not be able **“Offer up spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God.”**

“Presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice to the Lord” therefore is the basis by which any offering on our part to the Lord becomes acceptable. WHAT MIGHT SOME OF THESE OFFERINGS BE?

2) PRAYER

Where does God honoring prayer come from? I believe it comes from the lives of people who have presented their bodies as living sacrifices who are filled with His Spirit. In **Zechariah 12:10** it says, **“And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication”....** The Holy Spirit is called “the Spirit of supplication.” God honoring prayer comes from those who are filled with the Spirit or in other words from those who have presented their bodies as living sacrifices holy and acceptable unto God.” We would therefore suspect that the prayers offered up by these people would be a spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God and that is exactly what we see. Turn with me to **Rev. 8:3,4** **“And another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne, (4) And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel’s hand.”**

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What were the prayers of the saints? They were spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. The goal of our lives as priests should be as **1 Thess. 5:17** commands us “**Pray without ceasing**”. WHAT ELSE BESIDES PRAYER MIGHT BE CONSIDERED A SPIRITUAL SACRIFICE?

3) PRAISE

Where does God's honoring praise come from? It comes from the lives of people who have presented their bodies as living sacrifices, it comes from the lives of those who are living in obedience to the word of God, it comes from people who are filled with the spirit..... **Eph. 5:18** “**Be not drunk with wine where is excess be filled with the spirit, speaking to one another in Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.**”

We would therefore suspect that the praise of Spirit filled people would be a spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God and this is exactly what we see. Look at **Heb. 13:15** “**Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.**” Praising the Lord is a priestly function and should be considered a spiritual sacrifice.

What would you rather do? Would you rather focus on the Lord and all that He is and has done and continually be offering up the spiritual sacrifice of praise or would you rather focus on the world and all of it's imperfections and be filled continually with disappointment and a grumbling spirit?

The goal of our lives as His priests should hopefully be that “**His praise shall continually fill my mouth**” (**Ps. 34:1**). What other spiritual sacrifices can we as the Lord's priests offer up?

3) GOOD DEEDS

Let me ask you, in whose power did Christ perform His mighty deeds? The works Jesus performed were performed in the power of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus was accused of performing His miracles in the power of Beelzebub in **Matt. 12** what did Jesus call that accusation? He called it “Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.” The reason is quite simple the works that Jesus did were done in the power of the Spirit.

We are operating no differently than Christ. Every good work that we do will either be done in our strength or in the strength of the Spirit. Every work that we perform in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Spirit becomes a spiritual offering acceptable to God. Look at **Heb. 13:16** “**And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices God is pleased.**” The performance of good works, if it is done in the power of the Spirit, is a spiritual sacrifice.

A particular good work is emphasized in this verse and that is the good work of sharing. “**And do not neglect doing good and sharing....**” If you have presented your body as a living sacrifice to the Lord and are Spirit filled and you after seeking the mind of the Lord and deposit food items in our trash barrels that become a “**spiritual sacrifice well pleasing to God.**”

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If you have presented your body as a living sacrifice to the Lord and are Spirit filled and after seeking the mind of the Lord you decide to participate in our Angel Tree project this year those gifts that you buy becomes a **“spiritual sacrifice well pleasing to God”**. If you have presented your body as a living sacrifice to the Lord and are Spirit filled and after seeking the mind of the Lord you decide to increase your giving to Valley Bible Church your increased giving becomes a **“spiritual sacrifice well pleasing to God.”**

The presentation of our bodies is referred to as a spiritual sacrifice and when that has been done a number of other behaviors flowing out that also identified as being spiritual sacrifices such as prayer, praise, good works, and finally even the fruit of our obedience.

4) SOULS

Look at **Romans 15:14-16** **“And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another. (15) But I have written very boldly to you on some points, so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God, (16) to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, that my offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.** Not only is our yielding of our body upon God’s altar considered a spiritual sacrifice. Not only is that which flows from my life because of that yielding considered a spiritual sacrifice, but even the fruit of my obedience becomes a spiritual sacrifice. And there is no more precious or important outworking of our obedience than the fruit of the souls of men.

It may not be that all that are here this morning will have the joy of seeing someone coming to Christ solely as the result of your obedience in the proclamation of the gospel but hopefully this would be something as priests that you would want to be able to offer up to the Lord and you would be praying for and striving to that end.

CONCLUSION

We as Christians have the privilege of:

1) UNION

2) ACCESS

We have access because we have in Christ become priests. And as priests we have the privilege and joy of offering up spiritual sacrifices.

First and foremost our bodies which enables the Spirit of God to flow through our lives. And as he flows he will produce prayer, praise and good works which will also become spiritual sacrifices and as we faithfully minister the gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of these activities we have the joyful expectation of offering the fruit of our obedience the SOULS OF MEN.