

Section 10: Who is the Priest? (What are spiritual gifts for?)

In the Old Testament God had chosen only certain people to be priests. These were people who were *set apart* for doing ministry and they had a special relationship with God.

- 1) Which of the following things do you think the priest did as part of his work for God?
 - a. Bring sacrifices of worship to God.
 - b. Do acts of ministry to and for the other followers.
 - c. Speak to God and pray for the other followers.
 - d. Listen and study God's Word and bring messages to the people.
 - e. All of the above
 - f. None of the above

When Jesus came (the New Testament) God opened up this ministry and job of priest.

- 2) According to the verses below, who is now a priest? (Who is this "you" referring to?)

- ✚ 1 Peter 2:5 [Y]ou also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy **priesthood**, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- ✚ 1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal **priesthood**, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

- 3) In Jesus' church, who is called to be a priest?

- a. Special holy people who have been Christians for a long time
- b. Christians who have gone away to study and have a degree
- c. A few people who have been chosen by a church and hired for the job
- d. All believers/followers of Jesus

What does it mean that you are a priest of God?

It means that you have been set aside for God. The priests were specifically set aside for the work of God.

- ✚ "chosen people"; "belonging to God" –see 1 Peter 2:9 above
- >We are set aside for God to do His work, to fulfill His purposes. Our reward, like the Levites (Old Testament priests), is God Himself.

It means we have direct access to God.

- ✚ Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.
- >The believer does not have to go through a special person to talk to God.

It means that we are to be ministers to others.

- ✚ Ezekiel 44:11 Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, overseers at the gates of the house and ministering to the house. They shall kill the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to them. (This was ministry the priest was doing for the people)
- >Like the Levites (OT priests) we are called to be faithful priests **to** God's people.
- see 1 Peter 2:5 above. As priests, we are to minister to each other.

It means that we have been set aside to be declarers of God's praises to the world.

- ✚ 1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal **priesthood**, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, *that you may declare the praises of him* who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.
- >We are called to declare God's goodness and grace to the world. We are called to exalt God in the world so that others can appreciate His value and become worshippers of Him.

It means that we have been set aside to be proclaimers of the Gospel to the world.

- ✚ Romans 15:15 I have written you quite boldly ... because of the grace God gave me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the **priestly duty** of *proclaiming the gospel of God*...

Section 10: Who is the Priest? (What are spiritual gifts for?) –(continued)

Am I equipped as a Priest? Yes! God has equipped you by giving you several very powerful things!

God gave you His Spirit

- ✚ Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
- ✚ Acts 2:38 "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

God gave you His Word

- ✚ 2 Timothy 3: 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

God gave you Spiritual Gifts

- ✚ 1Peter 4:10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

God gave you access to Him

- ✚ Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

How do I know what my spiritual gifts are?

The bible gives many examples of spiritual gifts. All the gifts that God gives to believers are given for the purpose of ministering to others and building up the Body of Christ; the Church. God may have gifted you in one or more of these or God may have given you other gifts that are not listed here. Some of the spiritual gifts that the bible mentions are:

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|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| ➤ Exhortation | ➤ Administration | ➤ Wisdom |
| ➤ Giving | ➤ Apostleship | ➤ Tongues |
| ➤ Leadership | ➤ Discernment | ➤ Interpretation |
| ➤ Mercy | ➤ Faith | ➤ Evangelism |
| ➤ Prophecy | ➤ Healing | ➤ Pastor |
| ➤ Service | ➤ Helps | ➤ Hospitality |
| ➤ Teaching | ➤ Knowledge | |

You may look at this list and may not be sure if you have any of these gifts, or any others that are not mentioned here. Do not worry! It is not important that you definitely know your gifts. The important thing is that you desire to minister and help other believers grow in their faith and that you do whatever comes to mind that you think will encourage them and help them grow. As you are involved in ministering to others, maybe in the future, you will have a better idea of how God has gifted you.

Below you will see some very practical things that you can do to minister to other believers.

How do I minister to the other believers? Some things you can do:

- Share what God is teaching you in your life
- Share what you are reading in the Word
- Pray for others and let them know
- Encourage others in their relationship with God
- Ask God how you can encourage the believers when they corporately meet as a church