



CITY CHAPEL
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

MINISTRY SCHOOL Lesson 9 Functions of The Minister (Part 2)

INTRODUCTION

We have looked at the fact that the Bible calls every Believer a Minister of Reconciliation. We have also examined that biblically; all Christians are able to function prophetically and are called Priests and Kings. For the sake of easy remembrance, we have used the terms Prophet, Priest and Prince.

Last session, we dealt with the prophetic function of the Christian and looked at the principle and practices that enable a Believer to walk in this identity and capacity. We loosely stated that this area is generally about the spiritual private life of the person which informs their public service even though it is not confined only to private life. Again, this is to help focus and bring clarity to the mind, how we are supposed to function.

In this session we will now look at the 'office' or area of function under the term **PRIEST**. We are labelled as priests in the Bible so let us have a study about this to provide understanding and knowledge.

And have made ^{us} kings^{us} and **priests** to our God;
And ^{we} shall reign on the earth.
Revelation 5:10

The **Priesthood of all Believers** was one of the key pillars of theology that underpinned the Reformation, hundreds of years ago. The Reformers decried the chasm and class between the **Clergy and Laity**. Looking at the state of the Church some five hundred years later, that class and chasm still exists! The intent in this study is NOT to eliminate the Clergy (Church Leadership) which is biblical but to properly define the Laity (Church Believers).

⁴Coming to Him *as to* a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious, ⁵you 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
1Peter 2:4-5



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THE PRIESTHOOD

The idea of a priest and his intercessory work underlies all religion. From the time that the smoke of Abel's sacrifice ascended to God to the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, the history of the human race is inseparably associated with altars, priests and sacrifices.

Rather than start an academic discussion and elaborate exegesis of the Bible around the principle of the Priesthood, we will simplify this by a concise definition.

The Priest and the Priesthood was the capacity God gave certain men to stand in the gap on behalf of others as an intermediary and offer sacrifices that would atone for the sins of an individual or a community or nation.

Jesus has become our **HIGH PRIEST** and it is only through direct relationship with Him that Believers have the privilege to stand in the gap for those who do not have Christ.

²⁴ But He, because He continues forever, has an **unchangeable priesthood**. ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save ^[1] to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. ²⁶ For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is holy, [1]harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;*
Hebrews 7:23-26

This simple principle of being the bridge between divinity and humanity has now been given to all Christians as "Ministers of Reconciliation" so that we can be the light and conduit through which many would come back to God and have their sins forgiven.

¹⁸ And all these things are from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us **the ministry of reconciliation**. ¹⁹ In other words, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting people's trespasses against them, and he has given us ^[a] the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ **Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ**, as though God were making his plea ^[a] **through us. We plead with you ^[a] on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God!"**
2 Corinthians 5:18-20

The very definition of the word Priest demands that people be involved. You cannot be a priest in the absence of people. Therefore our function has to be in the context of others around us. That is why the word LOVE is integral to our priestly role.

³⁷ Jesus ^[a] said to him, "**Love ^[a] the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.**" ^[a] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest ^[a] commandment. ³⁹ The second is like it: **Love your neighbor as yourself**
Matthew 22:37-39

¹⁴ **You are the light of the world.** A city located on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ People ^[a] do not light a lamp and put it under a basket ^[a] but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, **let your light shine before people**, so that they can see your good deeds and give honor to your Father in heaven.
Matthew 5:14-15



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THE PRIESTLY MINISTER

The Priests of old were amongst the people and helped them learn the things of God. The Prophets did not generally stay among the people but would swoop in with the Word and disappear to the mountains. The Priest however stayed and lived amongst the people but was separate from them.

In the same way, we are in the world but not of the world. We are to be accessible to the people irrespective of their conditions and behaviours. They were to see our lives and be strengthened to connect with God.

¹⁴ Do everything without murmuring or questioning [the providence of God], ¹⁵ so that you may prove yourselves to be **blameless and guileless, innocent and uncontaminated**, children of God without blemish in the midst of a [morally] crooked and [spiritually] perverted generation, among whom you are seen as **bright lights** [beacons shining out clearly] in the world [of darkness], ¹⁶ holding out *and* offering to everyone the word of life,
Philippians 2:14-16a.

The role of every minister, every Christian, every child of God is to be a light (a Priest) among the people. Your connection with the God who made the Universe should 'shine through' wherever you live or choose to pitch your tent.

Arise [from spiritual depression to a new life], shine [be radiant with the glory *and* brilliance of the LORD]; for your light has come,

And the glory *and* brilliance of the LORD has risen upon you.

"For in fact, darkness will cover the earth

And deep darkness *will cover* the peoples;

But the LORD will rise upon you

And His glory *and* brilliance will be seen on you.

Isaiah 60:1-2

Worship & Praise

– The Priests offered incense to God as part of the sacrifices. We are called as New Testament Priests to offer the sacrifices of worship and praise.

¹⁵ Therefore by Him let us continually offer the **sacrifice of praise** to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, ¹⁶ giving thanks to His name. ¹⁶ But do not forget to **do good** and **to share**, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Your presence on your street, in the workplace and wherever you are connects the tangible presence of God to that place. Learn to offer sacrifice to God in the form of worship and praise which comes from your lips through your heart.



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Holiness

– The Priests and Levites lived Holy lives. This did not mean **sinless perfection** but a separation for God's use. In other words, they were the Lord's property and available for His agenda.

I beseech¹ you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies** a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your* ^{1b}reasonable service. ²And 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.

Romans 12:1-2

Word of God

The Priests taught the people the Word and made them learn about God through the scriptures. You may have heard this phrase **"you are the Bible, people read."** It is now the responsibility of every Christian to take the Word of Life to the thirsty souls of men that are all around us.

...has given unto us **the Word** of Reconciliation
2 Corinthians 5:19b

²⁰And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them* and confirming **the word** through the accompanying signs. Amen.

Mark 16:20

Prophetic Priest

We are now called like the priests of old to inquire of God on behalf of others, interpreting their dreams, destinies and requests. It is our role to find out what God is saying on behalf of those who are not priests.

⁷Then David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, "Please bring the ephod here to me." And Abiathar brought the ephod to David. ⁸So David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?" And He answered him, "Pursue, for you shall surely overtake *them* and without fail recover *all*."

1Samuel 30:7-8