

“A Royal Priesthood”
Sunday July 19, 2009
By Pastor Edward J. Thomas Jr.

God has created us for something. We may not know what it is yet in our lives, but make no mistake about it. We are created for something specific. From the moment we are born, God wants us to grow into something wonderful and precious for him. We are called into a royal priesthood.

In the Old Testament, the priesthood dressed in specific clothes physically. Today as part of the New Testament Church, we are called to dress in specific clothing spiritually. God has a very specific calling on each of our lives, and part of that process is dressing our spiritual man in the right garments to come before the King of Kings. We can fulfill the prophecy of the Old Testament by becoming who we need to be for God today.

I Peter 2:5,9

5. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

9. But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

In the Old Testament, the high priest was called to go before God for all the people. Now, through the death burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are all called to have a personal relationship with God. Because of that we have to put on the spiritual garments of the royal priesthood. We now have the ability to go to God ourselves.

Pastor Thomas asked each of us to think about how we act when we are in very special clothes. A bride would never go out and garden in her wedding dress, because it is too special. The same is true of Navy men and women when they wear their “whites” out. They have to be careful of what they do and how they act while in uniform, otherwise they may mess it up. How much more so should we respect the garments of holiness that God has given us? We cannot be careless with the way we act, the places we go, or the things we do when we are living in the garments of holiness.

Exodus 28:2–3

2. And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.

3. And thou shalt speak unto all [that are] wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

Exodus 28:9, 12

9. And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel:

12. And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod [for] stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two

Exodus 28:21, 29–30

21. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, [like] the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.

29. And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy [place], for a memorial before the LORD continually.

30. And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

Aaron had the responsibility of the Children of Israel on his shoulders when he went to God. We have the same responsibility. Not for the Children of Israel, but to have a burden for the people we meet who need to know God. When we go to God in prayer, we can go openly with the names of the men and women we meet in our day to day lives. We now have the ability to go to God personally and ask him to bless the people we meet and draw them closer to Him.

Pastor Thomas asked each of us to take a look at our own lives and ask ourselves do we care about the people we meet like this. Do we remember their names? Do we talk to God about them by name, as individuals? Or do we quickly forget them and move on to the next part of our day? God calls each of us to care for people this way. What would happen if we stopped judging people that came across our path? How often do we find ourselves thinking “he’ll never want to be a Christian”, or “She’ll never come to church with me”. God does not give us the responsibility to judge others. Instead, our responsibility is to care deeply about the people we meet and then take them to God in prayer. God will take care of everything else.

Exodus 28:36–38

36. And thou shalt make a plate [of] pure gold, and grave upon it, [like] the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

37. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be.

38. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.

Leviticus 8:9

And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, [even] upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses.

In the Old Testament, the word of God was written on tablets. Today, it is written in our hearts. The Bible teaches us that we should bring every thought into captivity. (II Corinthians 10:5). When we are baptized in Jesus' Name, we aren't issued new clothing

to wear around that will act as our “garment of holiness”. It is about our attitude. It is about what we do, and it is about the way we live.

Jude 23

And others save with fear, pulling [them] out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

This verse shows just how much we should want to have spiritual purity. We should hate even the garment spotted by sin.

Revelations 3:4

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

In Revelations we see that those that walk with God will be clothed in white spiritually. That means that we need to keep our garments as clean as possible. But how can we do that on our own? The answer is simple. We can't. Only God can keep us clean and make us whole. The Bible says that when we come to Christ we are made new. It should be no secret to the people around us that we are Christians. It won't take an announcement to let everyone know that you follow Christ. It can be seen in the way we act, what we say, and how we live.

Ezekiel 44:23

And they shall teach my people [the difference] between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.

Malachi 2:7-8

7. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he [is] the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

8. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

God wants us to be his priests in this day in age. This scripture in Malachi teaches us that we should seek His law and keep His knowledge. This can't be done unless we study and make God's ways a part of our life. We are supposed to live God's will naturally. It does not have to be a put on, or a show. If we give our hearts to him, it can become part of who we are to do God's will because it will be written in our hearts. (II Corinthians 3:3)

This is what it will look like as we begin to live God's will in our lives:

Matthew 28:19

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Acts 1:8

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Romans 12:1-2

1. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service.
2. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

This is wonderful news! There is more to being a Christian than just coming to church on Sundays. We are called to live a life that matters to God and for God. When we gather together for worship, we are just going to the spiritual gas station. The reason we come together is so we can live our lives in the garments of holiness we are supposed to all week long. God has a very specific plan for each of our lives. We need to dress in our garments of holiness, go out and care for others, and live the words of Christ to become what he is calling each of us to be.