

Priests of God

by Art Katz

Art Katz's sermon explores the vital connection between priestly and apostolic callings, emphasizing the need for a restored sense of priestliness in the church.

Duration: 1:23:33

Scripture: Hebrews 3:1, Hebrews 7:3, Hebrews 8:1, Hebrews 8:4, Hebrews 8:6, Hebrews 8:13

Topics: "Priestly Ministry", "Spiritual Consecration"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of embracing the priestly calling alongside the apostolic calling, highlighting the need for a deep sense of priestliness that is often lacking among God's people. It challenges individuals to wait on God, sacrifice self-interest, and be consecrated before Him to experience the radiance and authority of a Melchizedek priesthood. The speaker calls for a transformation from earthly-mindedness to heavenly-mindedness, urging a commitment to live in the presence of God and reflect His glory in all aspects of life.

Transcript

This is tape K-035, entitled Priests Unto Him, spoken by Art Katz. There's a theme on my heart, it's also the theme of the camp, about the kingdom of priests. I've not been able to shake it.

There's a particular verse in Hebrews, the third chapter, begins with this. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. I want us to consider that there's something attached to the reference to apostle, and that is the reference to high priest.

I think all of us have a high consciousness for things that are apostolic. But few of us have a high consciousness for things that are priestly. I think that what is expressed in the heavenly calling of Jesus is also implied for our own heavenly calling, and it will not be heavenly until God shall restore to us, or inspire in us, a sense of the priestliness that is joined with apostolic calling.

I just want to say from my own point of view, and I'm new at this subject, that I just sensed in the course of my own travels and modest ministry, that there is a precious little awareness of priestliness to be found among God's people. And though that I myself am Jewish, has not helped in this matter. As a matter of fact, on the few occasions when I've been required to sit in on Sunday school lessons, on priestly garments and all of the nomenclature pertaining to priests, I always found it rather dull.

But I'm convinced now that there's an eternal weight of glory in all of these things that pertain to priesthood, that God is now beginning to open in my own spirit. So I'm just going to ask the Lord, I've got more material than I could possibly express in one speaking, but that the Lord will just breathe upon us, through the random moving through this material, something of the sense of priestliness that will transfigure us all. And I want to say with absolute authority, that priestliness and apostolic calling are inexorably connected.

You cannot have the one without the other. And if we have suffered from anything in our generation, it is that. It's the absence of the priestliness that ought to proceed our apostolic walk.

So precious God, great high priest of our profession and our calling, our heavenly calling, come gracious God, in your own heaviness Lord, ultimate priest of God, Melchizedek priest, and breathe upon us, Lord, the spirit of this, which we so urgently need, that every aspect of our life, our walk, our talk, our ministry, might be touched by the sense of things that pertain to priesthood. In Jesus' holy name, bless this time and make it your own. We thank you and praise you for it.

Amen. The 8th chapter of the book of Leviticus describes the consecration of the priests. As you read it, it has a strange and antique ring to it.

It's so altogether remote from anything that can be considered modern, that the first temptation is just hurriedly to read it by as something that is rightfully buried in antiquity and has no claim upon our attention. But I want to say that that attitude is completely wrong. Everything that is in this chapter is profoundly relevant for this age.

I can almost say more so now than in the biblical generation in which it was given. It begins with the precious words, and the Lord said to Moses. And you'll find that that phrase is repeated throughout this chapter, and the Lord said to Moses, and the Lord said to Moses, and the Lord said to Moses.

Because there's not a requirement in here, an ordinance in here, that could have had its origin in human contemplation. The whole thing beggars the mind. The whole thing is counter to the flesh.

The whole thing is a calculated attack upon human sensibility and good taste. It has its origin in the heart of God, and completely contradicts all that is human. And for that reason, it is all the more valuable.

And the Lord said to Moses, take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, symbols of their office, and the anointing oil, and the bowl of the sin offering, and the two lambs, and the basket of unleavened bread, and assemble all the congregation at the door of the tent of the meeting. Moses did as the Lord commanded him, and the congregation was assembled at the door of the tent of meeting. Moses told the congregation, this is what the Lord has commanded to be done.

Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water. He put on Aaron the long under tunic, girded him with the long sash, clothed him with the robe, put the ephod upon him, and girded him with the scopely woven cords attached to the ephod, binding it to him. Moses put upon Aaron the breastplate.

He also put in the breastplate the urim and the tumim, and he put the turban or mitre on his head, and on it in front Moses put the shining gold plate, the holy diadem, as the Lord commanded him. Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle, and all that was in it, and consecrated them. He sprinkled some of the oil on the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all of its utensils, and the lava and its base to consecrate them.

He poured some of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him to consecrate him. Moses brought Aaron's sons and put under tunics on them, and girded them with sashes, wound turbans on them, as the Lord commanded Moses. Then he brought the bull of the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull of the sin offering.

Moses killed it, took the blood, put it on the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and poured the blood at the base of the altar, and purified and consecrated the altar, and made atonement for it. He took all the fat that was on the entrails and the lobes of the liver and the two kidneys with their fat, and Moses burned them on the altar. But the bull and its hide, its flesh and its tongue, he burned with fire outside the camp, as the Lord commended Moses.

He brought the ram for the burnt offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. Moses killed it, dashed the blood upon the altar round about. He cut the ram into pieces, and Moses burned the head and the pieces and the fat, and he washed the entrails and the legs in water.

Moses burned the whole ram on the altar. It was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet and satisfying fragrance, an offering made by fire to the Lord. And he brought the other ram, the ram of consecration and ordination, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram, and Moses killed it and took some of the blood, put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the great toe of his right foot.

And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put some of the blood on the tip of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, the great toes of their right feet, and Moses dashed the blood upon the altar round about. And he took the fat, the fat tail, all the fat that was on the entrails, the lobe of the liver, the two kidneys, the fat, the right thigh, and out of the basket of unleavened bread that was before the Lord, he took one unleavened cake, a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, put them on the fat on the right thigh, and he put all these in Aaron's hands, and his sons' hands, and waved them for a wave offering before the Lord. Then Moses took these things from their hands and burned them on the altar with a burnt offering, as an ordination offering for a sweet and satisfying fragrance, an offering made by fire to the Lord.

Moses took the breast and waved it for a wave offering before the Lord. For the ram of consecration and ordination, it was Moses' portion as the Lord commanded him. Moses took some of the anointing oil and the blood which was on the altar and sprinkled it on Aaron and his garments, and upon his sons and their garments also.

So Moses consecrated Aaron and his garments and his sons and his sons' garments. And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, Boil the flesh at the door of the tent of meeting and there eat it with the bread that is in the basket of consecration and ordination as I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall eat it. What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire.

You shall not go out of the door of the tent of meeting for seven days until the days of your consecration and ordination are ended, for it will take seven days to consecrate and ordain you. As has been done this day to the Lord, so the Lord has commanded to do for your atonement. At the door of the tent of meeting you shall remain day and night for seven days, doing what the Lord has charged you to do, that you die not, for so I am commanded.

So Aaron and his sons did all the things which the Lord commanded by Moses. It's not often that I'll read an entire chapter, but it's hard to omit any portion of this. And you know that you come to a certain sense

of exhaustion just in the reading of the description? What would it have meant then to actually have been a participant and to have gone through all of these laborious requirements of God, of cutting, of sprinkling, of blood, of every kind of foolish thing, of wave offerings, of sitting at the door of the tent of meeting? It's patently absurd, it's altogether exhausting, and when the blood and gore is finished and these besplattered men are waiting at the door of the tent of meeting, it's hard to consider that there's anything honorific or appealing about the role of priesthood for men.

I think most of us have rather glamorous notions of priesthood. We see ourselves in some kind of lofty image, but I'll tell you that the real image is the one that's described here. If men were so spent, so exhausted by the requirements of God, who are so doused in blood and gore and oil, that you can't tell where the sacrifice ends and where the priest begins.

They have somehow all become one, and truly they are a living sacrifice. And I'll tell you if there's anything left, after the lengths and the demands of this requirement for consecration, God in his wisdom gave one last stipulation. Let them wait seven days at the door of the tent of the meeting.

Many of us itch to be seen and to do for God. And just in all honesty, guys, there's a terrible human taint in a lot of our speaking and doing. Even our most modest testimonies cannot help but show an egotism shot through and interwoven, even in the very things that are Lord and God.

There's a human taint in so much that passes for ministry and witness in this generation. A stench, a certain smell of man that somehow forestalls and keeps from our experience the fire of God falling as glory. If I had all kinds of time, I would read you the very next chapter that begins on the eighth day, the day of new beginnings, when again another succession of offerings was required in these men that had fulfilled every requirement of God, waiting the measure of the full seven days.

But on the eighth day, in the day of new beginnings, God promised them and said to them, today the Lord will appear to you. Moses said, this is the thing which the Lord commanded you to do and the glory of the Lord will appear to you. And sure enough, at the end of that eighth day, when the last sacrifice is made, it says in the 22nd verse of that ninth chapter, then Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them and came down from the altar after offering the sunah, the burnt offering and the peace offering.

Moses and Aaron, what a picture this is, of prophet and priest, of apostolic ministry combined with priestly calling, went into the tent of meeting and when they came out, they blessed the people. Can I suggest that the people are never going to be truly authentically and eternally blessed until, again, Moses and Aaron go into the tent of the meeting, having fulfilled all the requirements of God for consecration, for separation, in the copious shedding of blood and sacrifice that cannot be numbered. Basil Eashlink, in a little booklet that I intend to quote tonight, speaks that so much of our blessing for other people is more pious wish than it is fulfillment.

Even the phrase, bless you, brother, is a kind of euphoric beep. It's a kind of a belch, rather than having the authority, the priestly authority of God that will actually confer blessing. I think that we have had an avoidance of blood and we have resisted sacrifice and necessary cuttings, which makes, therefore, our speaking of blessing mere pious wish rather than actual fulfillment.

But I'll tell you that there was a generation that when a priest raised his hands above a people, they were blessed. And I'm not speaking about titillation of feelings. I'm speaking about a heavenly ministration brought about by the authority of a man in priestly robes, utterly consecrated unto God, who can invoke for

men godly blessings.

We have not seen that kind of ministry except in fleeting moments, but not in the consistency and volume that our generation requires. Because I can tell you that the opposite of blessing or the absence of blessing is curse. And the whole of our world is transfigured, not in the glory of that which was described on the mountain, but something that is to be imagined in the bowels of hell, where men are losing the godly imprint and are becoming so deranged and so grotesque and so caricatured, you can hardly distinguish in some instances one sex from another.

It's a fearful and filthy and degraded age. And the function of the priest has been lost and its absence is written into the whole horror of our generation, for God said that the priest shall teach the people the difference between that which is holy and that which is profane. They shall teach them to discern that which is common and uncommon.

But if there be no priesthood, if there be no descendant, if there be no sense of the sacred and of the holy, how shall the spirit of it be projected into a godless world when it's absent even in the ranks of God's people, when so much of our own religious activity is a kind of entertainment or bland thing or technically and spiritually and scripturally correct thing, but lacks the fragrance of heaven, lacks that sense of priestliness, of one who has come out from the holy place, who has ministered first unto God before he then ministers unto men. How much of the ministries that come to our microphones are in a sense full of human braggadocio, they're brash, there's a metallic cling to them, there's a human stink that comes forth with them. It's a sense of men who have not waited in the holy place and worse than that, men who have no notion that there's such a place for which God calls them to wait.

We desperately need the restoration of the priestly sense of things. Prophet, priest, and king is the description of the ministry of Jesus. And I think that that priestly thing needs also to be deep in whatever calling we have, apostolically speaking, where there's going to be a clang, a metallic sound, a brash humanness that goes forth without speaking and doing, that stops short of the glory of God.

I'm surprised that we're content with so little. I'm surprised that we're content with mere good meetings and successful camps. I think that one of the failures of the priestly ministry to be expressed in us is that we have not even so much as the desire for the glory of God.

And I think that this must precede everything. An expectation that there can actually be glory of God falling from heaven as fire, men being brought on their faces, stupefaction, hands clasped over mouths, deep gasps and sobs and raps, and breaking when the presence of God comes as a priestly ministration to his people. God assembled the whole congregation of the people to watch this consecration.

You know why? Because as the priest, so also the people. They're not mere religious hacks. They're not a bunch of functionaries doing their thing, that they are paid off by the dollar in the collection plate and the people can go about their business while the priest does his.

There is such a bond of connection. There is such a vital link that as the priest goes, so also the people. And if you want to follow the melancholy history of Israel, and melancholy is the least of words to describe it, you need only to follow the history of its priesthood.

When it had its zeal, when it had a heavenly respect for its calling, when it was a separated class of men unto God, when they revered God and revered the duties they were given to perform, and they were

faithful in the performing of them, Israel was at its zenith. But when these men began to turn, when they began to be seduced away, when they were attracted to the Hellenistic culture that was then sweeping the ancient world, and began to give their children Greek names rather than Hebrew, more fascinating with wrestling matches than the sacrifices which they now consider to be ungainly and unbecoming and primitive, even as rabbis now presently speak. I don't know if you've had the experience of confronting a modern rabbi.

I've taken whole groups of church people to synagogues and temples on a Friday night for Shabbat service. And then the rabbi has answered our questions afterwards, and invariably there'll always be some saint to ask, where are sacrifices presently being performed? And the rabbi will titter or laugh or be embarrassed, and he'll make some wisecrack about it in the back room. And then he'll get serious and say, well, that was primitive Judaism.

We have since graduated from those bloody practices, and we have gone on to higher and more progressive forms. You know what I think? That not only have Jews, quote, gone on to higher and more progressive forms, but even the Israel of God is somewhat embarrassed and somewhat offended by the cutting and the bloodshed that is part and parcel of true priestly ministry and ordination. How'd you like to be washed in the water of the word before men? The humiliation of being naked before others, before even the first priestly vestment can go on your body.

And then one by one the clothing is put on, each prescribed of God, one layer after another, no wool, for God's priest shall not sweat. It's probably one of the greatest ironies of modern times that there's more sweat exuded on Sundays than any other day of the week. More feverishness, more anxiety, more apprehension, more nervousness, more freshly putting out and producing successful religion than we could ever know.

But I want you to know that the God who said, no wool, is the God still. The God who said, my priest shall not sweat, is the God still. And I'll tell you that there's a sense of men so taken from themselves, so weird in sacrifices, so immersed in blood and gore from fingertips to elbows, that there's not anything left of them to perform anything priestly.

And that is the heart of the mystery of true priesthood. It's in the power of His everlasting life, not in some makeshift pumping up in ourselves of some image of which we think priestly ministry ought to be. It's men so innovated, so devastated, so wiped out, so prostrated, so beside themselves, so exhausted, so understanding the holiness of things that are before them that they don't dare dream, to presume, to initiate, or to do anything out of their own humanity.

It would be a patent contradiction in terms. These garments, these vestments, these skills were attached to the priest with skillfully woven cords. It's not a quickie take on and take off.

It's not a stepping into the phone booth and coming out as Superman. It's not something performed only behind the pulpit and then discarded at home. It's something attached to the priest by skillfully woven cords.

And they're cords that ascend up to heaven. It's not something that a man has determined for himself to do. It's not a calling that he has chosen because he thinks that it's lustrous or appealing.

As the Lord commanded Moses, take now Aaron and his sons. It just so happened that together they constituted five. Beautiful picture and type and foreshadowing of the five-fold apostolic ministries.

But God counted it as one ministry and he counted it as priestly. And this is exactly the sense that is missing from our own apostolic understanding. Many of us come in service to men before we have ever considered turning to God.

Many of us come in the clothing of the street. You know what I'm speaking about. Many of us come stained with sweat.

Many of us have not the sense of the necessity for the cleansing of the water of the word. For the taking off of the things that are spotted and stained. For the coming into the heavenly garments of priesthood which is the high priest himself.

And coming before God and being prostrate there before we should ever consider turning to men. I have not the time to describe it. You can read it for yourself.

In Ezekiel 44 how God had a controversy with the priest and the Levites. He could not discard them because his gifts are without repentance. His gifts and his callings.

But he castigated them to this that they could only serve him at the gate. They could only serve in the outer court and they could only serve the people and they could only cut up the animals. But only one family out of the whole tribe of Levites the family Zadok meaning righteous could come before him to minister unto him in the holy place and in the inner place.

There is not enough of that kind of ministry. More a sense of men and what men expect and the pleasing of men than the sense of those who have waited before God. Not enough of seeing men who are turned around from their own intentions because in the holy place God has breathed yet another theme in their hearts for them to deliver.

And the strange thing is that you know what that obedience oftentimes brings? Reproach from men. I remember speaking at a great charismatic center in the west coast. I don't know how I got to such a place I never wanted it.

It was a divine arrangement where we were so opposite in every way. One of these great giddy gaudy great charismatic centers if I named it you would know it instantly. And that afternoon in prayer I had some intention of what I thought to speak that evening but in prayer in the holy place the Lord whispered a little leaven leavens the whole lump.

And on the basis of no greater knowledge than that I came armed with that one impulse to that meeting and told the people it would not be a message but an event which indeed it proved to be for in the very speaking of it I was interrupted by the minister who said don't slay the sheep preach the gospel. I looked with wonderment because as far as I was concerned I was preaching the word of God. And so I just went on to finish the message.

Somewhere in the course of my remarks without premeditating it I heard myself saying that in the life of every minister and every ministry there comes a moment of truth. And if you'll not face it and deal with it as the issue of truth and pass it over from that moment on leaven has been introduced in the lump. Little did I know how biting and how accurate and penetrating my words were to the actual condition of the fellowship

where I was speaking that night.

They were offended so offended that when I finished this pastor came to the microphone and said let us pray for our poor brother. I've always appreciated Brother Catch's ministry but evidently he has some kind of inner conflict which he is venting in his message. Let's pray for this dear man.

And one of his hacks came and laid his arm around me in a condescending way and they began to pray for me. And while that was going on some man got up out of his seat and crossed the entire auditorium and came by me and said brother I want to tell you that I completely repudiate all that is now taking place. I want to tell you that I witnessed that every word that came from your mouth was from God.

Here's my name. Here's my address. Come and minister in my country Pretoria, South Africa.

So later on I was taken into the office and I was grilled by the pastor and by three of his associates. And I tried to determine what was the fault that they found with me. Was it that the message was unscriptural? No.

Was it doctrinally unsound? No. I said what then was the fault? Well it was just a little too heavy art for this young congregation. There are many tender young believers and they wouldn't know how to understand such a word and it's likely to offend them.

I said what do you recommend that I do then? That I should look with my natural eye and take stock of the audience before me and then calculate my comments on the basis of what I see? I want you to know brother that that afternoon on my knees and in the inner place the God who is my Lord said a little leaven leavens the whole lump and I could not do other but speak the words that he has put in my mouth though it has offended me. Priestly ministry will often offend men. Priestly ministry will often be misunderstood by men.

Priestly ministry will often be bloody. Much cutting, much flames, much shedding of blood that not only are you covered with it in the course of your ministration but you have splattered others. But I'll tell you that if you're obedient to perform all that God has required in that cutting you'll find at the end a measure of glory from God.

When the priest can raise his hand above the congregation of God having come out of the holy place and the glory of God can fall as a fire. Put on the garments of God. Take off the garments spotted and stained with the spirit of the world.

Put on the vestments. Put on the breastplate. Let them be attached with heavenly cords to the God who has called you.

Put the little gold diadem upon your forehead and feel the heft of it as you walk. Your every step will register the weight of that gold shield right on your forehead with the words inscribed holiness unto God. Would to God every one of us could wear it.

Would to God in the realm of spirit we could always sense on our foreheads the sense, the weight, holiness unto God. Holiness unto God. Holiness unto God.

Holiness unto God. There'd be much less brash ministry. Much less humanity interspersed in the things that we speak.

Much less soulfulness. Much less tears that are profuse and human. More of the things that have their origin in heaven.

Because God is not going to force upon us the things that are heavenly and perfect so long as we're content and satisfied with something less. I think there'll be more sense of silence. More disposition to wait on God.

Less a rush to come to the place of speaking. More the waiting for the corporate mind of God by his spirit to seize us and to unfold the glory of his purpose at any particular convening of his saints. Let's feel the heft and the weight of that gold diadem.

Holiness unto the Lord. And then the anointing oil that was sprinkled on the tabernacle, the furniture, the articles, the dumb things that cannot speak. I'm always amazed that if God requires anointing oil on pieces of wood and brass, what then upon flesh and blood who are made in his image and who are called to serve him? How dare we presume ever to stand before men without the holy anointing oil? And it says in Exodus, upon man's flesh it shall not be poured.

Hallelujah that from the chin to the tops of the toes the flesh of man was covered in the righteousness of God's linen. Only one place where that oil could run down the head of Aaron and down his beard. It was the head.

The only visible thing and the only thing that can bear the holy anointing oil. Upon man's flesh it shall not be poured. And one of the most sad and melancholy characteristics of modern day charismatic culture has been the increasing amplification of our sound equipment and the other calisthenics and devices as substitutes for the increasing absence of the holy anointing oil.

It's holy and upon man's flesh it shall not be poured. But when God has his men in his place for his ministry called and bound to God by courts, not doing his thing, you can be assured the holy anointing oil will be upon him. Seven times and he poured some of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head.

And he brought the bull of the offering and they laid their hands on it and Moses killed it. There's so much death in priestly service. Such profusion of blood one animal after another fallen.

But the same blood of death is the same blood of sprinkling. There's no consecration without death. There's no life except for the blood that comes from it, sprinkled upon the servants of God.

A testimony again and again that the priestly ministries of God are not to be worked from human flesh, are not to be the product of human zeal, are not to be the expression of soulfulness or intensity or well intending men to do for God. Priestly ministry that touches time and eternity is only out of the sacrifice unto death. It is only out of that which is sprinkled of the blood of sacrifice and the resurrection life.

The Melchizedek priesthood is in the power of the everlasting life. This priest who had neither father nor mother, nor origin nor end of days, was it lived in the life that is eternal. And that's the only kind of priesthood that can be performed today.

You can almost measure the absence of true priestliness by the absence of the knowledge of the resurrection life, for the two are intimately linked together. You don't learn priesthood. You inherit it, just as the sons of Aaron.

And I'll tell you there was only one priestly garment and it was passed from Aaron to his successors and every man had to grow into it. It was not cut down to meet the measure of men. So is it also to this day, one garment in which we must grow up into it in the full Melchizedek proportion of the eternal life.

To minister out of anything but the resurrection life is to fall short of priestly ministry. And every one of us who have a discerning ear knows the difference. We've heard good messages, good teaching, good ministry, good testimony.

But there's a difference between that which is good and that which has its power and its life out of death. That's why God is calling for priests to stand in the gap for the wall that is falling down that has not been tempered by mortar that holds but has just been whitewashed. It appears right, sounds right, looks right, technically, scripturally, sound and true, but it's a wall that's going to collapse because it has not the mortar that comes from that organic matter that constitutes the stuff that sticks.

I don't know too much about mortar. What is that stuff that goes into it that is organic? Lime, which is the decayed accumulation of organic life of millennia ago. Without death, there's no wall that will stand.

It's just whitewashed. Without death and without the sprinkling of blood, there's no priestly ministry. There's just correct ministry.

There's not the fragrance of heaven. There's not the fire of God that falls and brings men on their faces. So they poured the blood on the base of the altar, and they took the fat that was on the entrails, the lobe of liver, and the two kidneys with the fat.

Moses burned them on the altar. But the bull and its hide, its flesh, and its tongue, he burned with fire outside the camp as the Lord commanded Moses. You know, I think we've got it all wrong, all backwards.

I think that what we're burning, and what we're thinking to sacrifice to God, is what we consider most valuable, the flesh, the hide, and the tongue. And what we consider a waste and distasteful, the entrails, the tissues, the guts, that we want to take outside the camp and destroy. May I tell you that God's way is not man's way? May I tell you that what is displeasing and distasteful to us is of God's sweet savor? He's not interested in the outer hide.

He's not interested in the flesh. He counts that with the dung. But what is in the inside, in that inner man, that which has been worked by God in the hidden place, this is the sweet-smelling savor to God.

And how many priests are there that can lay it on the altar, and that have it, who have waited before God, and have received and welcomed the dealings of God in the inner place and in the entrails that they have wherewith to lay before God as a sweet-smelling savor, a sacrifice, a burnt offering made by fire. I'll tell you guys it's the fire that makes it. And many of us have not the entrails, and we have not the fire either.

It's the dung that we're laying, and the flesh, and the outer thing, and it's not to God a sweet-smelling savor, and it's not going to bring from heaven an answer by fire that is glory. A priest if anything is one who has experienced the inner dealings of God. He knows God in the hidden place, and God has dealt with him in ways that cannot be explained to men, that are scandalous, and that men look upon as reproach, that you cannot explain but have only to suffer.

Their humiliations, things that God has wrought in you, in the stillness and in the quiet, if you've allowed God to bring you to such a place. If anything is characteristic of this generation, it's that we have little

disposition for quiet. We're the generation that has grown up with the transistors glued to our ears.

Our kids are the products of a generation that cannot do their homework except that there's a radio going or a TV. Silence intimidates us. There's not enough waiting on God in silence in the hidden places that we might have wherewith to lay upon the altar of God.

An offering made by fire to the Lord. What shall we say of the foolish practice of this touching the right ear with blood, and the thumb of the right hand, and of the right foot? I've enjoyed the discussion of Abraham. Although the word priest was never used in connection with him, unquestionably he was.

Long before these practices were prescribed of God, it was evident, spiritually speaking, that the blood of consecration was on the ear of Abram. How else then should he have risen early in the morning and saddled his ass when God called him to that which boggles all human understanding? Abram, take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, and make of him a burnt offering in the mount that I will show you. So he rose early in the morning and saddled his ass.

God had a consecrated ear upon which the blood of sacrifice and consecration was touched. Does he have your right ear? How much of your doing and going and being is the result of what men whisper, the expectations of men, the tune and the dance and the tempo of the world? Does God really have that ear to call you to acts of obedience that contradict even what you think to know and understand from God? This writer says that it is quite clear that in some way the governing faculty of every life is the ear, not necessarily the outward organ, but that by which we listen to suggestions. The suggestions may arise from our own temperament and makeup, our own natural inclination, the pull and draw of our constitution, deep-seated ambitions, inclinations, and interests.

To listen to these is to have our lives governed by our own interests. And probably the greatest mishmash that is to be found in present Christianity is the mixture of men who have well-meaning intentions to do for God, but also to do for themselves at the same time, wanting somehow to insinuate and to tie and relate the two together. It shall never, never work.

The right ear as the right hand is the place of honor and power so far as the hearing and the speaking are concerned. Does God have your ear? Can he stop you midway in your own course? You had the intention of speaking and doing one thing or another, but by a still small voice and a whisper and intimation, a suggestion from God, your whole course was redirected. And your obedience to it, for what is the purpose of hearing if you're not going to obey, will require your Isaac being brought to the Mount of Sacrifice.

Loss or reproach or things that cannot be explained. Does God have your ear? Are you consecrated? This is the secret, an ear alive only unto Him and dead to everything that comes from any quarter other than the Lord Himself. And I know that we who are called to this final generation are going to be called to such unconventional behavior.

We're going to be called to such acts of obedience that not only will the world not understand, but even our compatriots, our colleagues in the faith will be bewildered and offended. Does God have your ear? Is the blood of consecration upon it? And in hearing do you obey? The blood was also on the right thumb, which is a picture of priestly service unto God. And a lot of that priestly service is dull.

It's monotonous. It's routine. It's not at all anything that compliments the flesh.

Will you yet do it? Will you yet be obedient to do the things that God requires, though it contradicts your own temperament and disposition? What if God should call you to an act of divine severity? Will you obey Him? Your temperament is to be conciliatory and to make nice. Yours is to brush over and to hope that the outcome will be good. Yours is to look the other way.

You don't want to be misunderstood and to be looked upon as a harsh disciplinarian or a man who is unfeeling or unloving. And you know that if you do this, that is exactly the way you're going to be perceived. Will you yet do it? Will you be the instrument for the divine severity of God as well as His divine grace? Is the blood on your thumb as well as it is on your ear? Will you be ruthless if God should call you to ruthlessness? Will you be an instrument for His judgment if God shall call you to pronounce judgment? Until God has the whole of us in every kind of act, however much it contradicts what is our own natural disposition, He has not yet the priest.

The blood on the toe suggests that the Lord must have the direction of our lives, that we are to be controlled alone by the Lord's interests, and we are not always bidden to go. Sometimes the going is a relief. It is staying that is difficult.

How many of us have considered that? How much of our going is more an opportunity for us to be relieved from the pressures of unpleasant situations where we are, and we clothe it and cloak it in the name of service unto God when it is only providing for us psychic relief and cop-out? Until you're prepared to stay in the tedious and demanding situations of God, the blood of consecration is not upon your toe. Our going has been rendered dead to all but the Lord, and our staying also. Our life has been poured out, it has been let go, has been taken away, that is the life which is up for ourselves and of ourselves so that our life has come up to another level.

A priest has no life unto himself. He has no inheritance for himself. He has no possession for himself.

He has nothing in the world that he's going to acquire. He's not going to retire with benefits. God is his inheritance and his possession.

He's ungainly. He's separated. He's strange.

He has another tempo and another beat. He's God's. The blood is on the ear, on the thumb, and on the toe.

He's consecrated unto the Lord, and he cannot do other. When we seek our own ends, our own works, our own glory, we've yet to come to the priestly place. Jesus is a beautiful picture of one who only served the interest of his Father, was alive only to those interests and never considered his own.

If we are the Lord's, we must be governed by the Lord's interests and brush aside all the rising suggestion of looking after ourselves. The only question is, what does the Father say about this? I just had a conversation with a Jewish believer in Alaska, and he's being sent to help to shepherd a new work in the East Coast of the United States. He began to give me all the reasons why he's gone.

His Jewish parents live only a few miles from that location. There are other friends now that he'll be able to see and witness to whom he's not had occasion to witness to as a believer. It'll serve this purpose and that purpose.

He gave me a list of about a dozen commendable human reasons why he ought to go. But not in one of the twelve was there a suggestion that God was sending him. How many of us predicate our decisions on the basis of logic? Or we reckon that we'll be doing God's service? Or that it'll serve his interest if we do this or go about that when God has not said a word about it? How much of our doing has not been ordered of God at all? And how much of that which he would order we do before the time? Oh, to come to the priestly place where we're just covered in the blood of consecration.

We have no life unto ourselves. You can't tell where the sacrifice ends and the priest begins. They're all one.

He has no life for himself. And if he had anything left, it was burnt out in the seven days that he waited at the door of the Tent of Meeting. Have you waited seven days? Is it that we're Americans that we're so adept at producing schools of discipleship that process men in three months and are ready to send them out to change the world? Where is the waiting? Where is the opportunity to let that human itch so deeply ingrained, so part and parcel of our being, to die out in that final seven days of waiting at the door of the Tent of Meeting? Until that death has been consummated, God does not yet have a priest whose bloody hands can invoke the blessings of God unto fire and unto glory.

Oh, I tell you, we're missing something by our not heeding the Old Testament Scriptures. We're missing something in our blithe disregarding of what we consider to be the wearisome details and the nomenclature of Aaronic priesthood. And I'll tell you this, guys, that Melchizedek priesthood, which is our calling, is not less demanding than this, but more.

Maybe we ought to take just a look at some of the phrases in Hebrews that describes that kind of priestly ministry. Melchizedek, king of righteousness and king of peace. And it says of him in the seventh chapter, reading from the Amplified in the third verse, without record of father or mother or ancestral line, nor with beginning of days or ending of life.

You don't come into this by Aaronic succession. You don't come into this because you happen to be a Levite or your last name is Katz. You come into this because you have come into the son who is the king of righteousness and the king of peace and the high priest of God.

You are in the Melchizedek priesthood in exact proportion as you are in him, no more and no less. It has not to do with natural factors, natural choosing, but resembling the son of God is what it's all about. He continues to be a priest without interruption and without successor.

It's not a take on and take off. It's not a stepping into the phone booth. It's not the convenience of changing garments.

It's without change. It's eternal. It's without interruption.

It's priestliness which is written in your life. You're part and parcel of it. You're caught up into the high priest.

You're one with him without interruption. You know what that will mean? Everything has got to be sanctified. There's a sense of consecration about the most mundane aspect of our lives.

The most ordinary thing becomes holy. We don't dare approach our bedrooms or our kitchens. The chance conversations, there's no such thing anymore as small talk.

Everything has somehow become rarified, sanctified, consecrated, having eternal weight of glory. It's priesthood. The sense of this, the trailing of clouds of glory that should be attending the lives of those that are in this king of righteousness.

In the 16th verse, speaking of him who has been constituted a priest not on the basis of bodily legal requirements and externally imposed command concerning his physical ancestry but on the basis of the power of an endless and indestructible life. I'll tell you if the mere reading of the ironic requirements exhausts us, what shall we say of this priesthood? It cannot simply be performed on the basis of human zeal and well-meaning intention. Only on the basis of the power of an endless and indestructible life.

Is that the origin of your burdens for a dying world? Is that the origin of your concern for Israel? For an Indian people? For want in the world? I'd rather see men wholly insensitive and without burdens, waiting for the burden that comes as the expression of the indestructible life from heaven than they should fashion for themselves burdens that are seemingly inappropriate. Oh, for the dying world. That kind of burden bursts like a bubble with the first kind of pressure or challenge or sacrifice of loss to self-interest.

But the priestly burdens that inhere and are part of the endless and indestructible life shall not be in any way affected by gasoline shortages. It shall not be oil, yes, and Israel, no. It shall be Israel, yes, even without oil, without warmth, without heat, without the Sunday car, because the burden comes from the indestructible and endless life that is of the resurrection of the king of righteousness who is a witness for it is witnessed of him you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Therefore, it says in the 25th verse he is able to save to the uttermost, completely, perfectly, finally, and for all time and eternity those who come to God through him. Oh, for more of this kind of salvation. Oh, for less of the shabby kind.

Countless tens of thousands who are saved but not converted. All their life long a struggle trying to make it for God. Wearisome struggle, grinding it out in a wearisome and sweating away, trying to hang in there and find their little niche in heaven.

Surely they've not been saved by a Melchizedek priest because anyone who comes to God by him is saved to the uttermost. We need more of this kind of salvation and less of the four spiritual laws. Less cheapies, less appealing to the self-interest of men, of the benefits that will accrue to them if they should accept Jesus.

A priest would gag on such terminology as that. He would double up and clutch his guts to hear any such expression about accepting Jesus or any appeal for men to be saved on the basis of their filthy, egocentric self-interest. For it is a contradiction in terms.

It is not salvation because if you're not saved from yourself, you're not saved. And to be saved from yourself is to be saved to the uttermost. Oh, for more priests who will save men on the basis of the power of an indestructible life and not saccharine sentiment and little fleshly tears and soulish appeals.

Oh, guys! Take off the spotted garments and put on the righteousness of God and come into the priestliness that must be coupled with apostolic calling. He's a son who has been made perfect forever, it says at the end of that chapter. And then the eighth chapter begins.

Now the main point of what we have to say is this. We have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven. There's something about this priestly calling and the heavenly

calling that cannot be separated.

For the tabernacle into which the priest entered and the temple into which the priest entered and the Holy of Holies is only a carnal type and shadow and picture of that place into which the Melchizedek priest is invited on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. It is the very heaven itself to the throne of God. Have you been there? How do you dare presume to minister to men if you've not been there first? Waiting on the Lord is wholly unknown by modern saints.

Andrew Murray writes, Wait on the Lord, wait for the Spirit. In great quietness set your soul still, silent unto God and give the Holy Spirit time. Excuse me but I've not yet adjusted and I don't believe that I ever will adjust to the modern tempo of evangelical life that requires us to fly into cities on planes and be met at the airport and be whisked to a motel and wash our face and put on a tie and come to a service and sit on a platform and be called up within minutes and be expected to speak.

What do you think we are? Professionals or something? My God you'll give an athlete more opportunity to warm up than you'll give a man of God to catch the mind of the Lord for that people and that place and that hour. You have more respect for athletic performance than priestly service. You want it now and you're getting what you're paying for.

Cheap shallow unheavenly service. Scripturally sound good but the people leave as they came. Unchanged they have not been brought to the heavenly place.

The aura of heavenliness and the fragrance that is about to throne has not been breathed upon them for the man has not been allowed to wait on God in silence in the heavenly place. In great quietness set your soul still silent unto God and give the Holy Spirit time to quicken and deepen in you the assurance that God will grant him to work mightily. We are a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice.

The slaying of the sacrifice was an essential part of the service. In each sacrifice you bring there must be the slaying, the surrender and sacrifice of self and its power to the death. No more oxen and rams and bullets but us! Every single time.

That fleshly thing that has the opportunity to develop, that human thing that wants to perform, that human thing that wants the cheapest and easiest out to use last week's message needs to be brought as spiritual sacrifice and hacked before God and let the blood shoot out in that holy place that all the powers of self be brought to death that what comes forth must be from the power of the indestructible life. Ministry from heaven. I'll tell you when one such minister comes, we're not always happy for him.

We're intimidated because we thought we had it all together. We applauded our apostolic callings. We saw ourselves as well-meaning and industrious elders.

We were able to quote the scripture. We had a grasp of doctrine. We knew how to counsel men.

And then comes a visitor from heaven and we're devastated. He brings a fragrance and an aura and a spirit that challenges us to the root. All of a sudden we feel cheap and earthly.

Something about us heavy and human and tainted. We recognize that so much of what we've been saying and doing that we had not seen until that moment was human, all too human. And therefore the result of it could not exceed the origin of it.

Oh, for more heavenly invasion. Oh, for more of the fragrance of heaven. Oh, for those who will come to minister to men only after they have first ministered to God in the holy place, stretched out, prostrate and dead before him, waiting that seven days at the door of the tent of meeting for everything that's human and vain and selfish and earthly to be utterly burnt out and dissipated.

So that whatever comes forth is his life. Teach us, he writes, as we draw near to thee to wait, in the sacrifice of our own wisdom and our will, in the holy fear of the workings of our own nature, may we learn to lie very low before thee. That thy spirit may work with power.

Teach us that as the life of self is laid before thee, day by day, the holy life that flows from under the throne will rise in power and our worship be in spirit and in truth. Do you distrust yourself? Do you distrust your cleverness? Do you despise your eloquence? Are you ashamed by your ability? Are you fearful that it would be these things that be expressed before men? Have you given God the appropriate time to assure that all these earthly things, however commendable and impressive, will die out as sacrifice before him in the holy place, that the ministry that will come forth to men will have its origin in heaven and at the throne? Denying our self, our wisdom, our strength, in confident expectation of what he will do. I wish I had time.

I would just ask if you could obtain a copy of this, keep it under your pillow, read it day and night. The greatest embarrassment is it's written by a woman, Vassily Ishlink, a German woman, has got to tell us about the royal priesthood. There's so much I could quote from cover to cover.

She talks about those who have the authority to bless. Many devout people can say the Lord blessed thee, but one feels that the words express only a nice, pious wish and that there is no power behind it. That is, the one who speaks these words of blessing does not have the authority to move the arm of God in blessing.

His prayer does not penetrate to the throne of God. He has not been there, and hence nothing of the redemptive power of Jesus descends upon the other, nor does the peace of God come into the heart through the pronouncement of blessing. How we need a priesthood in this generation that can bless men, because their hands are dipped in blood.

They have submitted to all that the Lord has required through Moses. They are consecrated through and through men lost unto God, whose ear, whose thumb, whose foot, whose life, whose body, whose attention, whose thought, whose future, whose speaking is all established in heaven. For such men to raise blood-stained hands with the gore dripping from their fingernails to their elbows over the people of God will bring the fire of God as glory.

Men who will come themselves to be daily purified, men who recognize that the first sacrifice is for themselves, for the iniquity of themselves even as priests, who recognize the disposition of their own hearts, that even their most lofty speaking has an element of corruption. The disposition of their hearts, the things that we have been required to see in these days, our competitiveness and jealousies and covetousness, all these things require first a sacrifice for ourselves before we minister before God unto men. She writes, only those that are sent from the throne of God to serve mankind, only those people who live in the presence of God can serve others as priests.

My prayer tonight was that the spirit of priesthood, of priestliness would be breathed upon this people. This is not something that lends itself to teaching. It defies analysis.

It can't be laid out neatly. It needs to be breathed upon you or be splattered upon you or be sprinkled upon you. The sense of what it means of a life hidden before the throne, those who live in the presence of God, who can bring before men something of the heavenly fragrance, the separation from the world that can only be established there.

I'll tell you that you'll be haunted till your last day on earth by the temptations of the world until you have found that place, that priestly place in heaven before the throne, consecrated before God and prostrate waiting on Him. It is the final doing away with the power of the seductive strength of the world. Being in His presence, in the tranquility of the sanctuary of God where the priest lives hidden in His holy presence, where the glory of His countenance streams upon them, can they be prepared to carry the brightness out into the dark world.

It was true that when one of the sisters from this fellowship came to visit the Ben Israel family, she said, you're not yet radiant. And she said it all. It was true.

We're not yet radiant. But I'll tell you that we're desiring to be. And we're submitting to every process of God, of breaking, of grinding, of pulverizing, of being separated, of being stretched out, of waiting on God in wretchedness and silence, that the radiance might come.

That something of the transcendent glory of heaven can begin to flood our faces. And we shall not be satisfied until we shall have it. God is wanting a kingdom of priests in the earth.

A whole race of men and women who are radiant and transcendent beings. Because they have waited in the presence of Him who is light. Just let me conclude with some sober thoughts that she expresses.

Yes, she says it is of the utmost seriousness to live in the presence of God. Where no darkness is tolerated, the calling to priesthood is most grave. This isn't for amateurs.

This isn't for cheap thrill-seekers. This isn't for those who want to be quickly processed into ministry and do, do, do for God. For men who have a disposition to wait.

For those who love the heft and the feel of the golden diadem that every step brings the sense of holiness unto God, holiness unto God, willing to wait for it. Do we have any idea what it means to fail here, she writes, to stand before men and not be able to help them because there is no power to absolve and to bless? For us to become mere religious functionaries or glib charismatics, unctuous practitioners who have not the power and the authority to bless and to absolve in a priestly way a dying generation? How will we be able someday to stand before the living God when he requires our brother's blood at our hands and we failed him because we did not live in God's sanctuary and forgot to be cleansed from our former sins? I'm so foolish as to desire that anyone that meets us in the world shall go away scratching their head or stroking their chin wondering was it man or angel? That every encounter with God's people shall be an encounter with God. That every coming forth of God's minister shall be the word made flesh and an event and not just mere teaching or mere preaching.

That the radiance of heaven shall be so effusive, so flooding, the voice, the face, the manner of these priestly ministers that the world must be confronted and be left without excuse for spurning the kingdom of which they are the priests and the representatives. Instead we resemble more the world. Cheap, glib, quick, sharp, churches, so much entertainment, quickie things, playing games with holy things, discipleship, submission, authority, glib, cute kinds of practices, not the sense of priestly responsibility, not

the solemnity, not the sense of heaven, not the awesomeness, the fear of God, let alone we can project it to men and teach them the difference between that which is holy and that which is profane.

We don't know it ourselves. How can men be priests who can endure nothing and suffer immeasurably if they cannot gratify their appetite? Or when they are not loved or honored, does that get you to become unglued? If you're not patted on the back and applauded, if you're not properly esteemed and acknowledged, you become undone? Priests are indifferent to the applause of men as well as to their reproaches. They hear only from God.

And I'll tell you, God is often a long time in vindicating his priests, a long time. The heavens are often silent when you've rendered obedience to God and bear the shame of it. It may go months before God lets you to know that you were a faithful servant.

Can you stand it? Will you crack up? Are you living in the present spirit of the world, the now generation, gratified now, immediate gratification now, and you cannot bear the suspense and the tension of waiting in spite of the knowledge of Jesus as Savior? They have not yet entered their priestly calling. They remain bound to this world, dependent upon people, dependent upon circumstances, dependent on their own nature. How could they, when they are so subjected to sin themselves, be capable of helping others, of freeing others? How could they be witnesses to redemption when they themselves are still tied tightly to Satan's yoke and even still cling to it? That's why royal priests stand majestically independent of all people, conditions, circumstance and material things of this world.

Have you come to that place? You have no inheritance in the world. You're not looking for it and you're not expecting it. You're altogether indifferent to cars, to clothing, to money, to rewards, to success, to security or any such thing.

You wear what you have. You eat what's put before you. You drive in the accommodation that's given.

You fly. It doesn't matter where you get out of one airport or the other. It's all the same.

Majestically independent of all people, conditions, circumstances and material things of the world. Jesus has become their one and all, their inheritance. And now they go through the pains of judgment and kingly majesty.

They're able to live in primitive conditions. Truly a royal priesthood, personally free and independent of everything in the world, yet always ready to give oneself. Able with royal authority to loosen the fetters of others in prayer.

The priestly person rests in the peace of the sanctuary. Jesus is sufficient for him. Privations and troubles of all kinds, which have always been a part of his priestly life of devotion and sacrifice, only serve to unite him more intimately with his Lord and let Jesus' nature become more powerful in him.

Today a perishing world cries for such messengers that come to it from the presence of the living God. They have received power from him. They reflect the glory of his countenance.

They are truly royal priests. I just want to conclude with this verse in the 8th chapter of Hebrews. The fourth verse, if then he was still living on earth, he would not be a priest at all.

That's the long and the short of it. If he were living on earth, he would not be a priest at all. There's no way to live on earth.

To have your temple meted out by the drummers of this world, or to be responsive to the religious dictates of this world, or the expectations of men, and to be a Melchizedek priest who can loose the fetters of men and bring blessing by the stretching force of your hands. If he were still living on earth, he would not be a priest at all. Where are you living? Children, this is a call to the high calling, the heavenly calling, to be not only apostles, but priests.

To catch our life, our substance, our energy, our direction, our thought, our message, our burden in the holy place. Prostrate before him, suspicious of anything that emanates and rises up from our own natural life, which is brought again and again and again to the place of sacrifice, of cutting of the blood. When the fire of God fell on at eighth day, hallelujah.

When the people saw the glory of God fall as fire, they fell on their faces before him. I'm sick of seeing men persuaded to accept Jesus for the benefits that will accrue to them. Where is the fear of God that men should know? For the day of the wrath of the Lamb shall soon be upon them.

Who is going to save them from that day? Who is going to stand in the gap? Who is going to call them to warning? Who are the intercessors whose hearts are breaking for the burden? Who are the men who are so flinty-faced before God that can speak whatever foolishness he puts in their mouths, and men will not titter or mock? For the priestly authority of God is upon their declarations. Who will save men from burning? May it begin with our suspicion of our own earthliness, our hesitation to come even to any public and spiculous place, even to give so much as a word of testimony, if we have not first had our time in silence waiting before him for the burning out of that which is suspicious and selfish. O for the fragrance of heaven, O for the authority of the Melchizedek priest, O for the ministries that are conducted in the power of the indestructible and the everlasting life.

If they lived in the earth, they would not be priests. I bid you to come up to heaven and to despise earthly things, and will tell you that for every earthly fetter that you break and allow to be broken, there shall be pain. But as one beautiful poet said, what is bliss in heaven is first pain on earth.

Willing to suffer the weariness of priesthood, exhaustion, numbingness, blood splattered gore, oil, garments, weightings, heave offerings, eating the sacrifice, because you're not going to dispense this ministry cheaply and get out of town and beat it. You're going to eat what you perform before God, and it's going to be an indigestible lump if it has not first had its origin in heaven. This is serious stuff.

We will not be apostles till we are also first priests. This is a call to priesthood, the priestly sense in everything that we say, we speak, we do. Our homes, our marriages, the most ordinary aspects of our life to be suffused with heaven as a kingdom of priests.

Let's bow our heads and thank God for so high a calling. Hallelujah. Precious God, we're embarrassed at how sparse and threadbare and minimal this talk was on so great a subject as the royal priesthood.

But I ask you, mighty God, in the power of your endless and indestructible life, in the Spirit of God that is to be found in the holy place and at the throne, you would breathe upon your children in this room and your servants something of the sense of this high calling. May men have a fresh and new inducement to find a place in silence before God, waiting. May they invite the dealings of a radical God in their interior life that

they might have wherewith to lay upon the altar of God as a sweet smelling savor, an offering made by fire, of something that if you've worked in their gut, their intestines, may their life be more truly lived from there than from the surface.

May they tremble to come before men if they have not first come before you. May they never dream to serve God except in the priestly arraignment of God. May they despise anything that emanates from their own life, ambition, thought, knowledge.

May everything come from you. Hallelujah. That priestly, indestructible life.

Precious God, breathe the Spirit of priestliness. Hallelujah. And I would just ask you in the concluding moments of this service and these days of ministry and all that God has worked and spoken, if there's a sacrifice that God would have from you, even tonight, that you don't even dare leave this room because you're so intent upon being the priest of God, that there's something fleshly that needs to be cut and laid out upon the altar, something offered before God by fire.

Will you do it before you leave? I don't know how to ask you to do it. Will you make your own chair, an altar, and go to your knees and name something that needs to be sacrificed before God? Human ambition, perhaps? Vanity? Pride? The desire to be seen and to be recognized as men? Impatience? Inability to wait? Presumption upon God and doing that which you thought was pleasing to Him, but which He never called you to perform? If there's some sacrifice that you make before God tonight, before you leave, will you do it now? Just turn and go on your knees and lay it out before the Lord. An attitude, a hate, a lack of reverence for heavenly things, too much the victim of this world and the spirit of this world, and things that are casual and glib, a sense of dedication that needs to be performed now, tonight, before God.

Lord, I want to be a priest. I recognize this calling, Lord. And I take off my spotted garments, and I ask, can I thank you for the washing of the water of the word that I've already received? And I now invoke your blood, precious God, and that in me which is vain, lustful, selfish, fearful, easily intimidated and threatened by men, earthly, break the power of it.

Teach me how to come before you and find that heavenly place. Hallelujah. Gracious God, have for yourself a kingdom of peace.

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