

(Youth Bible School 2007) a Royal Priesthood

by Dean Taylor

The sermon emphasizes the significance of believers as a royal priesthood, called to live holy lives and represent God in the world.

Duration: 1:02:39

Scripture: Acts 5:1-11, Romans 6:13, Romans 14:7, Colossians 3:17

Topics: "Bible School"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses the issue of covetousness and the importance of not placing value solely on material possessions. He tells a parable about a rich man whose land produces an abundance of fruits, leading him to build bigger barns to store his goods. However, God warns him that his life is not defined by his possessions. The preacher emphasizes the need to live soberly, righteously, and godly, and to walk in love as Christ did. He also encourages the audience to examine themselves and their own opportunities and talents, reminding them that they have been given much and should not waste their resources.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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God bless you. Thank you, Brother Mark. I appreciate that emphasis of us being honest before God, thinking of those applications and what you wrote in there and what God knows in your heart.

You know, God cannot change the person that you're pretending to be. Do you know that? God cannot change the person you are pretending to be. God can change you if you're honest before God.

Well, today we're going to look at the priesthood. Following along our lines from Peter there, we're going to look at that he's told us that we are a royal priesthood. A royal priesthood.

That's a powerful, powerful thing. If you consider all the time that's spent in all the Old Testament and all the likes and figures and things that were to be lifted up to us to think about in the entirety of the Old Testament, then that he leans that all on you and calls us a royal priesthood. It's pretty significant.

What is a priest? A priest is one who presents himself as the representative of another. He's an advocate. As such, he instructs them in the way of righteousness and holiness and is to be so himself, for he is also God's representative.

He is a mediator. He stands there. Intercessor.

These likenesses that we get through the Old Testament and the New Testament, I'm afraid that in some of these things it's become numb to us. But these words are significant. Not only are we priests, but then he says that we as the people of God are the temple.

The temple of God. And that we are to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. Now, we can just spiritualize the whole thing and just make a bunch of analogies and word pictures and everything, but I'm not so sure it's just so imaginary to God.

He was just as concerned, I believe, with the stones and the building of those Old Testament temples that he filled with his presence, his Shekinah glory. And now he has living stones that he makes. And he has you as priests there offering those sacrifices.

But now in the New Testament, you're all priests. Every one of you. We're going to look at that.

Has some of these word pictures become numb? Have you heard them so often that they don't point anymore? Remember what Paul said to 1 Corinthians 6? He says in 1 Corinthians 6, 19. What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own. Don't you know that? He's acting so surprised.

He says in 3.16, 1 Corinthians. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. And that is the whole point.

The whole point of that temple is to have the dwelling place of God. And there you are. In 1 John 4.15. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

This idea of Christ within us. The presence of God. This old story that we heard ever since we were little.

Jesus in your heart. Oh, those are some significant words. And they give us the picture of what they had there in the Old Testament temples, in the Old Testament priesthood.

God within us. It's what Brother Denny's been talking about. The partaking of the divine nature.

It's significant. It's very significant. In Ephesians, Paul talking about it.

For though we, for through him, we have both access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. This is what Brother John Dee was talking about also.

This idea of the household of God. How we hear in the church of Jesus Christ, and you are temple and you are priest and then we come together and we're temple and priest built together. And he goes on and he says, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

You are a habitation of God. This is that two kingdoms. This is that separated unto God.

The people of God. A habitation of God. These are my people.

And I'm going to have them in the world. And they're going to be sparks and light and salt and life. And to be able to permeate into all cultures, into all men, into all kingdoms throughout all the ages.

And showing my name and there they are. Strangers and pilgrims in this world. They're not just there in Palestine anymore.

They're all over. But they're still the people of God. Nations have come.

Nations have fallen. But the kingdom of God still goes on and on and on. And still prays the same.

That's what it does. The idea of the purification that we've been talking about of the priest is not the final goal of the priest, is it? The priest was purified and sanctified so that he is prepared to minister. So is he prepared to go and minister to the people.

To minister to God for the people. He's go there to take their sins and their sacrifices. And he was there with the lambs and taking them to the blood sacrifice.

He was there showing them God and teaching them about God. He was there to stand as a place between God and man. To stand there.

That was what we saw in the Old Testament figure. When Ezekiel, in some of the prophetic books, it goes on and on about this some day type of priesthood that would be of all nations full of priests. We hear about these prophetic words.

One of them is in Ezekiel 22. Look at that real quick. Ezekiel 22.

I'm going to start reading. Ezekiel 22, 23. Ezekiel 22, 23.

And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation. There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof. Like a roaring lion ravening the prey, they have devoured souls.

They have taken the treasure and precious things. They have made her many widows in the midst thereof. Her priests have violated my laws and have profaned my holy things.

Listen to this. They have put no difference between the holy and the profane. Neither have they showed the difference between the unclean and the clean and have hid their eyes from my Sabbath.

And I am profaned among them. Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey to shed blood and to destroy souls to get dishonest gain. And her prophets, they have covered up them like putting up this temple and they've covered it up with untempered mortar.

They've come into conversions too quickly. They haven't made sure that everything was in order. Seeing vanity and divining lies into them.

Saying, thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression and exercised robbery and have vexed the poor and needy. Yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.

And here's God's heart. And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before me for the land that I should not destroy it. But I found none.

Therefore, have I poured out my indignation upon them. I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath. Their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God.

These are strong words. When we see the heart of the Lord looking for this kind of a priesthood, this kind of a people, it makes us tremble. In Ezekiel chapter 34, he goes on with this whole thing.

I don't have time to go through the whole chapter. I advise you to read the entire chapter. And he goes on and he says what he's looking for in this vision.

Ezekiel, you know, you wonder sometimes, what does the temple of God look like to God? This spiritual temple. You know, if you could just look up like you're in an airplane and you're looking down and you see all that's scattered throughout the whole world, but suddenly through the spiritual eyes, you're able to see this temple of God. And this is a sense of the way I see Ezekiel, who's taken up above, as it says there in all these visions he's given and shown all these things.

Here's his vision of the temple in Ezekiel 34. And the word of the Lord came into me saying, son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. I'm sorry, Ezekiel 44.

Oh, that's a good one, too. Ezekiel 44. Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary, which look at toward the east.

And it was shut. Then said the Lord unto me, this gate shall be shut. It shall not be open and no man shall enter by it because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it.

Therefore, it shall be shut. It is for the priest, the prince. He shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord.

He shall enter by the way of the porch of the gate and shall go out in the way of the same. That is our Messiah, our King and our Lord Jesus Christ. And the only place, the only entrance is by him.

In verse 4, then brought he to the way of the north gate before the house. And I looked and behold the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. And I fell upon my face.

There's again the attitude. We see a man of God, a person of God standing before the presence of God and how they behave. We don't have to wonder how you're going to be in the presence of God.

You've seen it. Every knee shall bow. And the Lord said unto me, son of man, mark well, take a good look at this.

And behold with thine eyes and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord and all the laws thereof. And mark well the entering in of the house with every

going forth of the sanctuary. See how everyone's going into this house.

And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, thus says the Lord God. O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations in that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it. Even my house, when ye offered my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations.

He goes on and on and talks about a priesthood that did these things and compromised these things and his judgment on them. He goes on then. And in verse 15, he talks about a priesthood that he desires and he gives them some very specific things.

He he talks about the way they want them to dress before his presence. He talks about that they can't marry a divorced person or a widow unless it's a widow of a child of a priesthood of the child of Israel. He talks to them about against drinking of wine and the profaning things.

Notice, though, in verse 19, when he talks about their garments. And this is the big point I'm trying to get across to you. I'm not here to this whole week to give you a bunch of rules and different things.

Your dress is not going to make you holy. By not listening to a certain kind of music, you're not going to be holy. By doing these things, you're not going to automatically be holy.

It says here, and thou shall not sanctify the people with their garments, even though he just told them how to dress. Do you see the difference here? I don't want to just stand up here and give you. I want you to see the holiness of God.

And I want you to understand being a people of God. And then when you get a hold of that and you compare the elements of God versus the elements of the world and you're looking at this and then you're looking at your life. Then don't look at what Brother Dean has to say to you or Brother Denny or John D or anything.

These things should be self-evident to you. There they are. So you don't have to answer to me on Judgment Day.

You do have to answer to the Word of God. And so I'm not trying to say that any of these things, if we bring out some specifics, are going to do the sanctifying of you. But when you are a chosen people of God, it makes a difference.

When you have come out from among them and become separate and take not anything of them, then it's going to change you. Guaranteed will change you as it changed this priesthood in Ezekiel chapter 44. Yes, those acts themselves don't sanctify you, but a sanctified person will, will change.

Absolutely. Absolutely. So we go in there and we see this, this idea of being this intercessor presence, this mediator and God's priesthood.

Now, not long now, the kingdom of God in all the parts of the New Testament is not one specific place, but he wants to take the same concept of this priesthood, this temple, and now to spread it out amongst the entire world. And so now he has this priesthood of all believers, this priesthood, and he's spreading it into the nations. And this whole idea of this intercessor, this presence, this priestly presence is a calling of the

priest unto God.

The Word of God declares that we are a holy priesthood. First Peter two, five, a royal priesthood in first Peter two, nine and revelation. It says a kingdom of priest.

Well, this idea and remember that that is this mediator position that we have. We ourselves are no longer a mediator between God and man. That is who? Jesus.

He alone, the man Christ Jesus stands as a mediator between God and man. But we as a priesthood, as it says in second Corinthians to remember that we are ambassadors as if God is speaking through us to you. Be reconciled to God.

That's our place. That's our priesthood. And when we have a mediator position between the world and he has that priesthood out in the world and I want you there.

Beckoning to the world to come to God. It's two different things. And we see this intercessor position.

An intercessor stands between something and God, between the world and God, between a sinner and God. But he also noticed he has to have a close relationship with God to be able to do that. And in Exodus chapter 14, I think it's 14 where where Moses talks about where Moses is talking about the the most incredible example there of him interceding for the people of God and wanting to draw back.

God's just saying, I'm going to disinherit them and wipe them out. And he wants to wipe them out. And it's the most beautiful example of interceding for a sinful man.

But he couldn't have done that if he didn't have an Exodus chapter 12, which it says that Moses spoke to him face to face, mouth to mouth. So when you have that separated unto God, it's for a purpose to minister, to be a priest, to be an intercessor, to be into the world and to offer that priesthood. And the same thing that just like in the priesthood, it matters what things you do.

You're going to be careful not to touch this unclean and that thing. I'm a priest. I'm not going to defile my mind with that.

I'm not going to look at that. I'm going to shun those things. I'm going to keep myself unstained from the world, as James tells us to be, so that I can offer up the spiritual sacrifice to God.

There's a beautiful verse that I just this morning looked up one of the words in it, and I'm so excited about it. I can hardly stand it. Look at the end of Romans, Romans chapter 15, 15.

I looked up this word and I couldn't believe the word that was used here. And I got so excited. I started telling the people there in my house.

I think they were wondering why I was so excited. But here it is in Romans 15, 15. We see Paul using this kind of language for 15 chapters.

He's trying to explain to the Jews why he has a ministry among the Gentiles and how he feels he has a calling there into the world and to spread the gospel to the whole world. And he says there, nevertheless, brethren, Romans 15, 15, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort and putting you in mind because of the grace that is given to me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles ministering the gospel of God. Do you know what that Greek word there ministered is in the

Greek? Do you know what it is? Yes.

The word for minister usually is what? Diakonos, where we get our word deacon. But that's not the word there. The word is liturgos, liturgy.

In other words, what he's giving is the same type of thing that we see all this idea of the priesthood to offer up a liturgos, a liturgy as if they had in the Old Testament priesthood, but now not in a temple, not through a bunch of vain ceremony, but literally in his ministry. This whole thing is a sacrifice and this whole thing, a temple. And he's going there to offer now.

And look how it continues to go. Ministering the gospel of God, liturgos, the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles may be acceptable being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. He's taking the entire Gentile people and offering it up to God as a sacrifice, a sweet smelling savor.

Here it is, Lord, the souls of men. Praise God. That's a New Testament priest.

That's a New Testament priest. So when we look at these things and looking at our idea of being in the priesthood, that's the idea. The ambassadors, the minister of reconciliation, as it says in second Corinthians five.

Now, then we are ambassadors for Christ. As though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ's stead be reconciled to God.

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Praise God. We look at this priesthood.

We see that there are several different things, interestingly enough, about them. You see, in the New Testament, again, these words are not just vain words. God does not speak vain words.

We'll be held accountable for every idle word. And this idea of us being this priest among the Gentiles, this priest among the world, this holy nation, this holy priest, I believe is very pointed for us to understand how the priesthood of the Old Testament lived. And one of the interesting things that they did was, it says in Numbers chapter 18, in Ezekiel chapter 44, verse 28, that they had no inheritance in the land.

They had a, each of the, you know how they went to each of the tribes and they handed this to them and they handed this to them and they came to the priesthood and they said, now to you, I'm not going to give you any land. I'm going to be your inheritance. And that's what he said to them.

So if somebody was in the flesh, they'd say, well, it would have been nice to have a big plot of land. But those who knew what he was talking about probably fell on their face, thanking God. And so in this, one of the topics, and Brother Mark brought it up this morning, is something that we want to look at the altar.

I'd like to touch on in the practical, materialism. It would be, I can't spend, I could spend obviously a long time talking about this thing. And oftentimes we, as ministers, we can get in the habit of just preaching sins of the youth and not things that follow us on when we're older.

But I think it would be irresponsible not to see also materialism and covetousness. Because there's, as John Dee was, I was talking to John Dee this morning about it. There's two things that, that God said, don't be like the Gentiles like this.

And one was the way we rule or the way we lead. If you look at the church history, there's been some pathetic examples of that. And the other is materialism.

Don't be like the Gentiles. Don't think like they think on these things. This is the separate kingdom.

The kingdom, they think this way. I want you to think this way. There should be a difference between you and them.

There should be a difference. Let's turn to, just quickly, to Luke chapter 6, verse 24. If you go through the scriptures from the Old Testament to the New Testament, you get, if you, if you think this is a side issue for our Lord, it appears that it's very plainly it is not.

God from the very beginning, when He sees widows and poor oppressed, when He sees people starving to death, it affected Him. And He was wroth with the people who did not do something about that. But just in the whole way we go about thinking what you gotta do to make your life right and to get your little nest egg and to go your way.

You know, I have a job and I've decided with my job to just be a, I try as best as I can, Lord willing, that I'd be able to continue to do this just to be a contractor and not to be an employee of my job. With that, I get received no benefits. And one of the things I'm around the break room a lot of times or something, they'll say, what do you do about benefits? What do you do about, you know, retirement? What do you do about, I mean, we all have all these 401ks and this investment firm and all this and things.

And I mean, what do you do about that? Oh, I don't have any of that. You have six children. I know.

Praise God. Well, that's a pretty big liability. It's an asset.

And the whole way of thinking is just totally opposite. I mean, they get very nervous about it. Did you check the stocks lately? Did you see what's happening? Oh, investments.

It's doing this. And it seems like they're just always around this thing. I mean, huge decisions are made in their life deciding I've got to have this and this and this to make sure this whole thing works or I'm in trouble.

God, Jesus says, no, not for you. That's what they worry about. You, the people of God.

I'll take care of you. I'll take care of you. And Luke chapter six, verse 24.

But woe unto you that are rich. Wait a minute. I thought it was a blessing.

Remember, what is woe? It's a curse. But woe unto you that are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full, for you shall hunger.

Woe unto you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men speak well of you. He goes on and it speaks to these things in Luke 12, 6, 12.

Sorry, Luke chapter 12. Let's look at that beginning of verse 13. Here they get into this little thing, arguing over inheritance.

It's just like you just took a little step into one of these things that everybody in the world just argues about. And this is so common. Luke chapter 12, verse 13.

And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me. This isn't fair how this whole thing is coming out. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge over or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed and beware of covetousness.

For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possess. And he spake a parable unto them. The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully.

And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do? Because I have no room where so to bestow my fruits. And he said, This will I do. I will pull down my barns and build bigger barns.

And there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much good laid up for many years. Take thine ease.

Eat, drink, and be merry. And what Brother Denny was talking about yesterday, the casual Christian. Just sort of enjoying things now.

But God said unto him, Listen now. God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then who shall those things be which thou hast provided? So he that layeth up treasures for himself and is not rich toward God.

And therefore I said unto the disciples, Therefore I say unto the disciples, Until you take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, neither for your body, what you shall put on. The life is more than meat and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which neither have storehouse nor barn.

And God feedeth them. How much more are you better than the fowls? And which of you which taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do the thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies of the field. Consider the lilies, how they grow.

They toil not, they spin not. And yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory are not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothed the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye which ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of a doubtful mind.

For all these things the other kingdom does. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after. And your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

When we look into this materialism and covetousness, again, it's all for the Scriptures. I just want to touch on a few abuses to this doctrine. One of those abuses is the abuse of idleness.

Now, this one rich man here himself wanted to be idle. Just hearing this morning, Bill Gothard gives the analogy here that if, was saying that if people, that the hippie generation saw that if all we're going to do is wait until we get old and retire, then we're going to do it right now. And this is what this man here wanted to do.

Soul, take thy knees. I finally built up my nest egg and now I can just relax. This sin of idleness is a sin that has vexed the people of God since the beginning.

Do you remember? Who can name me the sins of Sodom found in Ezekiel chapter 16? Stand up and say it, Ryan. That's right. And also what? That's right.

Abundance of... That's right. Here it is. Ezekiel chapter 16, 49.

The sins of Sodom. I thought they were. Well, here they are.

Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom. Pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters. Neither did she strengthen the hands of the poor and needy.

And they were haughty and committed abomination before me. Therefore, I took them away as I saw good. Idleness.

We see in New Testament, some of the Christians thought it was to be spiritual just to kind of sit around. Paul rebuked him pretty hard. 2 Thessalonians 3, 8 through 15 says don't even feed them if they're going to act that way.

Those who should not work should not eat. If you don't provide for your family, you're worse than an infidel. So, not just being idle.

That's a snare there. But working with our hands and honestly to be able to give unto God. I talked to an Amish man once.

He called me up and there was a person in the community which was stirring the community up about a Sabbath rest. A Saturday Sabbath rest. And he said to me, he said, you know, he's always talking about resting and resting on the Saturday.

And, you know, I kind of struggle with it. But then I, you know, I said to him, I said, you know, the thing about it is you seem to be resting every day of the week. And you're in my home.

And, you know, the same scripture that says that you should rest on the Sabbath also does say in six days you shall work. And I said, well, that's a good point, brother. So, I don't want to explain away anything.

We in Lancaster County, and we've seen that, we can get justifying our busyness very much. And that needs to be brought before the altar of God. And don't deceive yourself.

Are you storing things up? Are you content with what God gave you? Or you keep trying to build this thing up? What kingdom are you building? So, please don't deceive yourself and say, well, I don't want to be idle. God knows your heart. Next, of course, would be pride.

In 1 Corinthians 13, we know that you can give every single thing you have. But if you do not have charity, if you do not have love, how much does it account for? Zero. Zero.

How about just a little bit? Nothing. The other is self-deceit. In Acts 5, 1 through 11, we have a strange story about Ananias and Sapphira.

And they came in there and they wanted to, and they came in there and said, I have given everything to you. And we lay it at the apostles feet. And you know the story.

The apostles said, wait a minute, you lied. You actually have this thing that you and your wife decided to do. And he dropped dead.

Here's something that can happen. And I just say this as a point of caution. I want you to get zealous for not being covetousness.

But sometimes Satan, he'll love to just trade off our covetousness or trade off one of our sins. Oh, try it over here. If we don't watch our heart, it's deceitfully.

It's so deceitful. Who can know it? And so I'm just trying to give you a few cautions here. Well, this is kind of self-deceit.

Let's say you're, you're, you know, you're, you're preparing yourself and you're saying, OK, I'm going to live in this little tiny place. And it looks real poor and everything. But you've got literally millions of dollars or you've got so much of this and this all stored up.

And you go around in this pretending of being very simple. You're out living in, I don't know, somewhere far off somewhere. And you give, you tell everyone how much sacrifice and how much you're giving to people.

You actually maybe speak to people about how they're being covetousness because they should live like you. But all along, you've got all this tons of things stored up in barns and all these things. Be careful.

Be careful. Just be honest. What did he say to that Ananias and Sapphira? All you have is yours.

It was all yours. I want you to freely give it. I don't want to have some constraint on you to say, OK, bring up here to the altar everything you have.

Everything you had was yours. Just be honest with yourself. Be honest before God.

Be honest with the Holy Spirit. Also, there's an idea of forced poverty. 2 Corinthians 9, 7, 1 Corinthians 6, 17 gives us some instructions on what to say to those that are rich.

Wait a minute, I thought we all were completely right here. We came to the altar. We all said we made sure we came together.

And now we have this thing together. And we have this idea that we're going to make ourselves this little kingdom here and and everybody's again, it's supposed to be a free will offering. He wants you to be able to offer this up.

If we have the idea that we're just going to make ourselves this little kingdom and then and then each of us have this ownership in the kingdom. Sometimes the covetousness can come out of our own family covetousness into the colony or into the actual group there. You know, we tend to love what we own only.

You know, we can't seem to go to a park that's a public park and say, oh, this is beautiful. We'd rather sit in our own backyard after we bought all these huge things and we have all this thing and you own it. And you say, oh, now that's beautiful because you own it.

That's something carnal in our heart to love what we own. All is the Lord's. All is the Lord's.

And to be able to freely. So, again, I'm just saying these things as matters and cautions. Now, again, I appreciate.

I do appreciate. I had a Hutterite man call me up years ago. He says, do you think there's anything wrong with community? I said, no, it's beautiful.

I have nothing wrong with it. Unless you're making that some kind of thing that's not scriptural. Again, all these things are for us to do, to give to God, to sacrifice to God, to love God with, to show Him our love.

And to help the poor and to help those that are hurting among us. But if in any of that thing, there's a little traps that we can go to. But not to dwell on the traps.

Turn to James chapter 5. The fact is the warnings are here. You know, some of these scriptures are hard. I remember, I heard a sermon.

It was by John Dee. Preached one time on this. And it was hard on the Sermon on the Mount.

And we were all kind of trembling. And brother I was there with, he stood up and he says, you know what? I'm not here. But I don't want to, how do you put it? Numb or anesthetize these points that Jesus has given me.

You see, if you're not there, then be honest before God. Don't cover it up and explain it away and come up with big theologies to make these things not sting anymore. James chapter 5, verse 1. Go to now, ye rich men.

Weep and howl for your misery that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. Oh, you think it's real fancy clothes.

It's like the church in Laodicea. You ever seen some children or I'm sure you missionaries there in Africa can see these people even in their own social classes. One thinks they're so much better than the other.

And you're looking at them thinking God sees all our petty riches and sees them as moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered and the rest of them shall be a witness against you and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. You have heaped treasure together for the last days.

Behold the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud. Crieth and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived in pleasure and on earth and have been wanton.

You have nourished your hearts as in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and killed the just and he doth not resist you. So, you know, this idea again, we trick ourselves.

I was just in Wal-Mart the other day and I was picking up a baseball glove for my son. And I was there and I was thinking, oh, what should a baseball glove cost? You know, I was going to get a leather baseball glove. And I went in there and I saw this real nice baseball glove and I looked on it and it was like \$23 or something.

I don't remember. It was very cheap. I thought, wow, \$23.

Hmm. I started to think. I looked on it.

Made in Indonesia. Hmm. Sometimes I just wonder, we're so, we consume so much in our culture.

Are there people that are being oppressed and misery while we just live our life blinded by what's going on? And again, I don't want to make any condemnation on you or anything like this. Just to make us think in the way God thinks. He sees the whole world.

He sees all those different cultures and we're running into this and running to that and getting this and getting that. And all along, there's a whole bunch of slaves somewhere messing around, making these little things. And they're crying out in their poverty.

I don't know. It just makes me think I don't I'm not making a rule against any of them. Everything in your life is either an idol or a tool.

And just just being simple for the sake of being simple is ridiculous. You can make a God out of that. You know, sometimes God requires us to expend extravagance amount of money for his purpose.

Sometimes he does. He wants an offering poured out to him. The price that it costs for missions.

The price that it costs to do the work of God here in America. The price that it takes to help a brother with his hospital bill or to be able to help somebody. Those things sometimes are extravagant uses of money.

Just being, you know, simple in of itself. That's not the whole picture. Second Corinthians 8 gives us a neat little picture of a blessing.

An easy way, a non-constraining way, a free will way that we can live and be blessed. And second Corinthians 8, 13. For I mean, not that other men be eased any burden, but by an equality that now at this time, your abundance may be a supply for their want.

That their abundance also may be a supply for your want. That there may be equality as it is written. He that hath gathered much hath nothing over and he that hath gathered little has no lack.

But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. Again, I don't want you to get judgmental. I want you to start thinking, oh yeah, I know so and so.

You know, I tell you what, you know, some of the most covetous people in the world, I'm afraid, are some of the third world people who are poor. If you're thinking in your mind this is affecting somebody else, you're looking the wrong way. All of us need to look at ourselves.

If you're here in America, you need to look at yourself. Not only because of the means that you could do, the resources and the availability, the talents that you've been given here in America are many. Don't think you're one of those who are given the one talent from Jesus.

You were given at least the five. You have opportunities that the rest of these third worlds cannot do. And so what are we doing with it? Again, he says, tell those who are rich to be ready to give.

Well, if there had to be people who are able to live that way, God just, He doesn't make us all just everybody the same. You know, there's some people who just happen to have this blessing in their life and some have another blessing and the other blessing. And if you start to be covetous looking at someone else and the other thing and then start to be judgmental about everybody else, it's not going to come out right.

But if just out of a free will we can give unto God, we won't be like the Gentiles. We won't be. And the people of God, once again, can you see it now? God looks down.

Those are my people. Do you see what they do? Look what they did over here. They helped this poor starving person.

Do you see how they did this over here? They got their resource together and look at this mission that was planted. Look at over here. And these people who look at you and think, wait, I've got to do this, this, this, this and this just to make sure I keep living.

And the people of God are just running around serving Him freely. Wow. Now, that's a difference.

That's a difference. A royal priesthood. A spiritual sacrifice.

It's a blessing. John 3.16 tells us how to be saved, right? 1 John 3.17 tells us if you're saved. Look at that.

1 John 3.16 Everybody knows John 3.16, right? How about 1 John 3.16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whosoever has this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. So, let's take 3.16, but let's also take 1 John 3.16. The spiritual sacrifices of the priest.

Our lives. Do you hear my burden this week? I do not want to give you a bunch of list of rules. And I don't believe there's any end to our walking with God and giving up a living sacrifice.

I guarantee you, go talk to these missionaries who are here, and they're living there in these abject, impoverished types of way of life. Each of them are meeting with God, saying, God, what can I do? How can I offer a sacrifice? How can I continue to give more? It doesn't end. You're not going to be able to lay me up a standard here today, and you do that, and you're going to be okay.

God is continually drawing you on. He continues saying, like unto Peter, come on, let's go the next step. Come on, let's walk on water now.

Let's keep going. Let's keep going. Come on.

Let's keep going. Be perfect. At what standard? Be perfect.

At what standard does He tell us to be perfect? As my Father in Heaven is perfect. Oh, what a sacrifice. What a beautiful, sweet... It's all of your... Remember, all you have is yours.

And all these different things... All things are lawful, but not all things edify. What are you giving your life for? What are you doing? 1 Peter 2.5 He 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. Hebrews 13.16 But do not forget to do good and to share.

For with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Before that, the verse before that. Let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God.

Philippians 4.18 Indeed, I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, these things that were sent to him in his ministry, as sweet-smelling aroma. An acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

Don't let these priestly metaphors just go right off of you. Do you understand what he's saying? This is the litogos of the people. This is our offering up.

When we come to church, you're not to just sit there and say, well, I was at this conference last week. I was out in the hallway. And this lady came in.

She says, does the preaching start? I said, no, the preaching has started, but I think the music is already getting going. She said, well, I sure hope the music was better than it was yesterday. She said to me.

I guess she didn't like the music. If our idea of coming to church is just to sit there and wonder how you're going to be fed, how you're going to be treated, you're not getting the idea of a priest. When you're a priest, you come there and you've got a work to do.

You're coming here to offer. You come to church. You come before the Lord to offer up a spiritual sacrifice unto God.

It's a work of the people. Not a work as in working your righteousness, but a just coming to the Lord. So if you're coming here and you didn't get anything, then you didn't sacrifice anything.

But when you offer a true sacrifice, in the Old Testament, remember Cain and Abel? How did he know? One sacrifice was accepted. The other was not. One was offered by blood.

The other was not. Oh, come and offer sacrifices to God. Romans 12.1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies, your bodies, a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

Guess which word? That's Latria. Again, this whole idea. It's your reasonable service.

It's your reasonable offering up to God. These metaphors are powerful. They are.

The priesthood. There's something that was very profound about that dark day that Jesus died on the cross. Do you remember how it turned black in the middle of the day? The early church spoke of a thing called the eighth day.

That all through the Old Testament covenant, the old covenant, people could live a secular life and then come one day a week and offer it to God. You had a priesthood, a select people, but everybody else could live a secular life, right? You had your priests and you had those who had inheritances. You had your secular life and you had your godly life.

But God said that He wants an entire nation of priests. Well, what does that mean then? They said it this way. The eighth day.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. They went back. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven.

The Jewish people sacrificed and went back to work. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. And Christ was on the cross.

And He was sacrificed. And the veil in the temple was ripped. And the day turned dark.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. And they came into the eighth day. A perpetual Sabbath.

A perpetual priesthood of all these believers that everything in your life was now given to God. Everything. Everything you did, that if you do things for your own self, guess what it is now? You're a Sabbath breaker.

Everything is to God. Everything. The Scriptures goes on to tell us, in talking about our idea now, He says, and Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10.31, Whether therefore you eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

What do you mean eating and drinking unto God? Yes, everything. Colossians 3.17 and 23. And whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.

And whatsoever ye do, do it hardly as unto the Lord and not unto men. 6.13 of Romans. Neither yield ye your members of instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, or your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

Romans 14.7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto God. And whether we die, we die unto the Lord.

And whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. Go to Matthew. Turn left two books and go to Zechariah.

Right there almost at the end of the Old Testament. Turn left at Matthew. Go past Malachi.

And right there in front of Malachi is a prophecy from Zechariah about everything in your life. What do the priests have over their head in their hats? Or their miters? What do they have? And what does it say there across their head? Holiness to the Lord. Chosen, selected unto God.

These are His people to offer up those sacrifices. But now, look for the New Covenant. Look at this verse.

Circle it. Look at it. Think about it.

Study it. Chew on it. And let it get inside you.

Zechariah. Last chapter there. 14.

Verse 20. The whole chapter is about the remnant of God. The remnant of God and the future.

Zechariah 14.20 In that day... You heard about the holiness of the Lord on the priest's hat. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses holiness unto the Lord. And the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts. And all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them and seize their end. And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanites in the house of the Lord of hosts.

Your dishes. Your cars. Everything about your life.

Holiness to the Lord. Everything is given to God. In that day it's not just a special priesthood.

In that day, everything. So let's get in your car now. Alright? Okay.

What, you don't like my car? I didn't say anything. Is it holiness unto the Lord? You know, what's wrong with that? I didn't say anything. Is it holiness unto the Lord? So you don't like red.

I didn't say I didn't like red. You don't like my tires? I didn't say I didn't like your tires. I'm not giving you a bunch of rules.

Is it holiness unto the Lord? Let's go into the kitchen, girls. Alright, let's go to our home. Let's go into our homes.

What? You don't like my fancy stuff in here? I didn't say anything. Is it holiness unto the Lord? Oh, so you don't like all this. I didn't say that.

Is it holiness unto the Lord? Now, I'm not trying to make everything stark and ugly. Everything in your life is an idol or a tool. But what are you doing it for? What's the purpose? What are you driven by? What's making your choices? That's all I'm saying.

Is it holiness unto the Lord? It just affects everything in our life. Why? Well, you know, your son comes to you. I'm thinking about this job.

What does that job entail? What about some people in their church? They want to go do this thing over here. And you know, it seems to be having fun and all this. And again, I don't want to be an ogre.

Just ask yourself. And everything be in the presence of God. Some people thought maybe I was a little hard on some of these things.

You know, in this last minute here, I just wanted to touch one last thing on that music. I'm sorry to keep hitting it. But I want to again say that I'm not trying to write up a music standard here.

I'm not saying if you sing in minor, if you sing in this and that, it's wrong. Have you ever met some people like on the streets that are punk rockers? Have you ever asked them what they think of country music? Do it sometimes. Hey, what do you think of country music? Oh, I hate country music.

You ever go down the street and you see somebody in the country, go down to Texas and you go there. Hey, what do you think of? What do you think of jazz? What do you think of class? Oh, I hate that stuff. Oh, yeah.

You like country. Yeah, I like country. You're driving there in the street and you see this happen to be people from down south of Mexico or something.

And their their car is bouncing to this mariachi or whatever. Hey, what do you think of? What do you think of pop music? Oh, we hate pop music. And you know what? We laugh at those people.

But you know what? Those people know what kingdom they're in better than you do. I don't need a bunch of rules about my music. I listen to the the hymns of Zion.

I listen to the people of God sing and my heart just sings. I love it. I mean, I do.

I don't need all that. I hate that other music. I don't need a bunch of rules.

I can smell it. I used to sing it so I can smell it easy. All that worldly stuff.

Oh, but when I hear the saints sing, you know what my biggest joy is? When everybody's singing loud enough that you feel this, that your hymnal starts to vibrate. Have you ever listened to that? I love that. When you're hymnaling and when you get to that point where the hymnals vibrating, you're there.

I think that's where you need to be. I love that point. So that's that's the way I see these things now.

All right, real quick. And then I'll be done. Again, we have elements of the world, elements of God.

I'm not going to give you a rule. You judge. All right.

It says here in this newspaper article from Tulsa Tribune talking about sorry to name his name, Michael W. Smith concert in town there in Tulsa. Here it is. Quote Smith with synthesizers, blaring drums, blazing and guitars screeching, sent a young crowd into a frenzy from the beginning to the end.

Another one said with sweeping strobe lightings, the stage and crowd areas. Smith took the stage with some twirling dance steps that sent the crowd into a rocking frenzy. The moment Smith's hands hit the air, the audience responded with over the head, hands clap and stomping feet.

Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace that has brought you into the revelation of Jesus Christ. Teaching us, grace does the denying and godliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously and godly and walk in love as Christ also has loved us and has given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, a sweet smelling savor. But fornication and uncleanness and covetousness, let it not be once named among you as become a saint and neither filthiness nor foolish talking nor jesting, which is not convenient, but rather the giving of thanks, elements of the world and elements of God.

Another one, Carmen, a newspaper article said, one of the first songs, routines, Carmen swings into a jazzed up fifties imitation of Elvis Presley called Celebrating Jesus. Carmen shakes, stutters and shimmers, just like the king himself. And the crowd cheers and bebops in the aisles.

Neither filthiness nor foolish talking nor jesting, which is not convenient. Corinthians, you tell me that everything should be done in order, not even having three people speak. The group White Cross, a publication recorded the concert, stating a hot another one article, a hot new six piece band from Rhode Island got the place rocking with a blend of pop, metal medleys and straight ahead power.

The crowd was in a frenzy by the time White Cross appeared and the front of the auditorium was packed with screaming metalheads. Foolish talking, jesting, sobriety. D.C. Talk speaking in Dallas, Dallas Morning News, April 27th, 1996 article says this.

When they reported on the concert series on Freak Show was the name of their ministry show there. As teenagers shrieks filled the Dallas Convention Center moments before D.C. Talk took the stage Friday night, one of the relatively few grownups in the sold out crowd observed. This is just like the Beatles.

You know, I know it's deep. I've been there. Let me tell you.

I want to tell you right now there's deliverance. There's deliverance. It was hard for me, brothers.

I had to throw my stuff away. I had to. I had to throw it away.

I thought I could. You know, I'd kind of stick it in the back of my drawer and I'd listen to it again. I grew up on this stuff.

My whole life grew up with this stuff. Just ask yourself. I'm not giving you a rule today.

I'm not. But when you're there, when you're listening to it, ask yourself holiness to the Lord or not. You decide.

You decide. Amen. We're out of time.

Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we give it all to You, Lord. Holiness to the Lord.

Do it within us, O God, not by our strength, not by our mediation, but through the mediation of Jesus Christ within us. Crying out to this world, be reconciled to God. Do it, Lord, in our lives.

In Jesus' name, amen.

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