

The Priest

by Henry Law

The sermon emphasizes the importance of Jesus Christ as our High Priest, who ministers for us, offers gifts and sacrifices for sins, and secures our salvation forever.

Scripture: Exodus 28:1, Hebrews 3:1, Hebrews 7:23, Hebrews 7:27, Hebrews 9:7, Hebrews 9:12, Hebrews 10:11

Topics: "Christ Our Priest", "Eternal Redemption"

Description

Henry Law preaches about the significance of Christ as the Great High Priest, emphasizing how He fulfills the Priestly ordinance ordained by God, unlike human priests who are flawed and temporary. Christ, chosen by God, offers Himself as the perfect sacrifice, entering the Most Holy Place with His own blood to secure eternal redemption for believers. His Priestly work on the cross is a complete and once-for-all sacrifice that forever saves, cleanses, and blesses His people, making Him the only Mediator between God and humanity.

Transcript

"Take unto you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto Me, in the Priest's office." Exodus 28:1

No pencil's art can represent the sun. No image can portray Christ's riches. He leaves all boundaries behind. But still His knowledge is the soul's choice food. It is the joy of joys, it is the life of life. The tabernacle stood to be the witness of His truth. The Altar was upraised, the victims died, the incense curled, the lamps were lighted, the Bread of the Presence was presented, to paint in varied ways His varied worth. These many types taught much. But this full cluster is not a full picture. A living office, therefore, receives birth. An active order is now added. The Priest appears, to be an ever-moving type of redeeming work.

Reader! we live in times when erring lips misrepresent our Lord. But err we cannot, when we behold Him in the Priestly ordinance. Our Priest is not on earth. The Spirit witnesses, 'We have a great High-priest, who has passed into the heavens.' Who can this be but Christ? Thus Christ is the Priest who ministers for us. Ignorance makes many priests. Faith knows but one.

First, mark the call. It is most clear. No human mind selects THE PRIEST. No self-called man usurps the work. The service is ordained by God. The sacred order has a door which none can pass but by divine command. The heavenly will thus speaks--'Take unto you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him.' The

purpose is distinct: 'No man takes this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.' In Christ the fulfillment is found. 'That is why Christ did not exalt himself to become High Priest. No, he was chosen by God.'

There is a volume of instruction here. Christ swiftly flies on outstretched wings of love. But all the flight, and all the course are in the path which God marked out. The Father chooses and the Father sends. The Son obeys and hastens to the work. Hence all poor sinners may repose, without one fear, on Christ. He comes commissioned to discharge a settled service. He saves according to decree.

The office is protected by another fence. None can pass through who have defect. The mandate is stern. All who draw near must show completeness in complete perfection. Thus says the Lord, 'Whoever he be of your seed in their generations that has any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God.' This leads us to explore the all-surpassing worthiness of Christ. He is beauty in its full-blown blaze, and grace in its most graceful form. He is as bright as God is bright. He is as perfect as God is perfect. Righteousness is His belt. Glory is His robe. The very heavens are unclean beside Him. Reader! keep Jesus always in your sight. The world in all its tinsel-show will then no more be seen.

This admiration has transforming power. Faith looks, and as it looks, an inward likeness to Jesus grows. We 'are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' He is the holiest man who sees by faith the most of Christ. Let Christ, then, take the Priesthood for His people. He has full worthiness. No sin ever stained Him.

Through this vestibule, we may press on to view THE PRIESTLY WORK itself. It is a tree of many branches. The main are thus described--'Every High-priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.' At the altar the chief functions were discharged. There is an altar, then, at which Jesus served. Calvary shows it. Let faith, with open and adoring eye, survey that scene. It gladdens heaven and affrights all hell. It should be meditation's happiest seat.

The promised Lamb appears. The victim chosen before time began, the theme of prophet's song, the crown of patriarchal hope, the jewel in each typifying casket, is now led forth. It is the God-man Jesus, Jehovah's fellow, creation's author, the Lord of all things, the Prince of life. He comes to die, that He may save; to bleed, that He may make atonement; to lay down life, that sin may be destroyed. An altar is prepared. It is sufficient for the mighty load. Its pillars are the strength of Deity.

But what Priest leads this Lamb and binds Him to the Altar? The Priest is Jesus. He teaches this when speaking of His life. He says, 'No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.' The Spirit bids us mark the Sacrificer's hand, when He adds, He 'through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God.' Jesus well knew that nothing but His blood could satisfy the holiness of God, and He did not withhold it. He loved to save, and therefore loved to die. He joyed to do His Father's will, and therefore joyed to give Himself. The language of the cross is loud and clear. All that my Father's glory asks--all that My people's need requires--I willingly present. I gladly die to honor God and bring redemption to My flock. My soul, turn often to this self-sacrificing act. Do you seek proof that He desires your pardon? Behold it in His arm stretched out to give Himself. You must be spared. He will not spare Himself.

But when the blood was shed, the Priestly work was not concluded. On the most solemn day of Israel's year, the High-priest passed within the veil. He stood before the mercy-seat. But not without the proof of sacrifice enacted. He brought the blood. He sprinkled it before the ark. Is Jesus here? What is the Spirit's

comment. 'By His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.' We thus gain vision of the courts above. Our eyes are opened to a wondrous sight. We see our Jesus transacting still the priestly functions.

My soul, be much in spirit, and by faith, in heaven. It is a sin, a shame, a folly, and a loss, to live apart from Him who ever lives for you. Abide by Jesus. He is never absent from the Father's side. He ever shows His soul-redeeming blood. It has an eloquence which must prevail. It has a plea which no accusing rage can answer. It is full price for all the ransomed race. It fills the scales which justice brings. It gives to truth its every demand. It silences the Law's stern curse. It claims all pardon, and all sins are pardoned. What now can Satan say? The High-priest shows the blood. All charge is answered, all guilt removed, the blood-bought are absolved.

The High-priest bears a censer, also. From it a cloud of rising incense covers all the mercy-seat. Thus Jesus fills the heavens with fragrance. His precious intercession sheds precious aromas round. He pleads that all His work on earth is done. He spreads His wounded hands. He shows His wounded side. He proves that every term of the vast covenant of grace is kept, that sin is punished, and His people free. Oh! the rich savor of such rich pleas! All attributes take up the shout, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?'

The High-priest exercised another function. It was his happy province to strew blessings round. 'Instruct Aaron and his sons to bless the people of Israel with this special blessing.' Jesus is called to be a blessing Lord. Mark His departing act--'He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.' And now He lives in heaven a blessing-life, and opens there His blessing-hands, and utters there His blessing-voice, and displays there His blessing-smile.

Poor sinners feel their sin. They see the Savior. They flee to wash in His all-cleansing blood. They hide beneath His glorious righteousness. This is a blessing. They burst the bonds of sin and Satan; they love the sacred feasts of Bible-truth and holy ordinances. This is a blessing. They rejoice with joy unspeakable; they trample on the world, and all its snares, and all its baits. They see hell vanquished, heaven their home, saints their brethren, angels their ministering guardians, Jesus their all. This is a blessing! Life is theirs; Death is theirs; Christ is theirs; Heaven is theirs; Glory is theirs; Eternity is theirs. This is a blessing! All these streams flow down from Jesus our High-priest, who ever lives to execute this blessing work.

It is the Spirit's solemn will that we should know and use this Great High-priest. Hence, by repeated contrasts, He magnifies His worth. This teaching bids us give ear. Let us advance, then, and pluck some fruit from these luxuriant boughs.

"There were many priests under the old system. When one priest died, another had to take his place. But Jesus remains a priest forever; his priesthood will never end." Hebrews 7:23-24. The priests who ministered to Israel's sons were only men. Dust was their substance and to dust they soon returned. Death soon removed them from their post. Our Great High-priest is very God. His life is immortality. Eternity is His day. No time can bring decay to Him. No age makes His seat void. So long as mediating work remains, His mediating office lives.

"He does not need to offer sacrifices every day like the other high priests. They did this for their own sins first and then for the sins of the people. But Jesus did this once for all when he sacrificed himself on the cross." Hebrews 7:27. The high priests were of corruption's seed. Sin cleaved to their most holy service. Their very best was vile and black. They must make offerings for themselves. They needed blood to wash

away their guilt. Jesus is pure as God is pure. He breathed no atmosphere but perfect holiness. Poor sinners have a sinless Priest in Him.

"But only the high priest goes into the Most Holy Place, and only once a year, and always with blood, which he offers to God to cover his own sins and the sins the people have committed in ignorance." Hebrews 9:7. The high priests passed the veil but once in every year. He entered heaven as His own abode. There, day and night He pleads, and will present incessant pleas, until the last saint be safely gathered home.

"Once for all time he took blood into that Most Holy Place, but not the blood of goats and calves. He took his own blood, and with it he secured our salvation forever." Hebrews 9:12. The high priests' victims were but creatures of this lower world. The blood was only blood of beasts. It had no saving power. It could not touch transgression's infinite pollution. Jesus presents Himself to God. He brings the very blood of God. All worlds are worthless when compared to this. Believer, this is your full salvation.

"Under the old covenant, the priest stands before the altar day after day, offering sacrifices that can never take away sins. But our High Priest offered himself to God as one sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down at the place of highest honor at God's right hand." Hebrews 10:11-12. The high priests offered often. The victims died, the altars blazed, the incense burned from year to year, from day to day. Jesus presents one victim once. His death once died, His life once given, His blood once shed, fully and forever washed out His people's sins, redeemed His people's lives, and saved His people's souls. His one surrender of Himself as the atoning Lamb, forever quenched all wrath, forever took away all curse, forever satisfied all claims, forever saved the family of faith, forever opened heaven, forever vanquished hell. To add to infinite perfection is impossible. Woe be to them who think such offering incomplete!

The Spirit cries, 'fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.' Hebrews 3:1. Reader! obey. Make Him the center of your every thought, the home of your adoring mind, the first, the last of meditation's joys. Christ's Priesthood is a theme which time cannot exhaust. It is a theme for which eternity is short!

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