



The Priesthood of all Believers

One of my friends is an Episcopalian priest who almost always wears a clerical collar while in public. It's one of the ways other people can recognize that he is a member of the clergy, and that opens doors for witnessing and ministry. Yet, even when ministers wear their clerical collar, sometimes things can be confusing.

There's an old joke about an Episcopalian priest who was wearing his clerical collar during a visit to his wife who was in the hospital following surgery. They talked for quite a while, and when it came time for him to leave, he leaned over the bed and gave his wife a big, passionate kiss. The woman in the next bed over just stared at the two of them in disbelief. After the priest left, the stunned woman said to her roommate, *"You know, I've been a faithful member of the United Methodist Church all my life, but my pastor has never even come close to treating me as well as yours does!"*

OK, sometimes it is confusing to tell who's who among God's children. For example, would you consider yourself to be a priest? No? Well, think again.

Let's read some Scripture from the NKJV. In Exodus 19:6 we find God speaking to Moses and saying, *"...you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."* In Revelation 1:5-6 we find John writing to the seven churches in Asia, saying in the salutation, *"To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."* Finally, in 1 Peter 2:9 we find the reminder that *"...you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."*

Each of these verses describe those who trust in the Lord as *"priests."* These verses are among those used as the basis for the doctrine of *"The Priesthood of all Believers."* In these verses, the authors are not

writing about a select few among us who are called ministers. Rather, inspired by the Holy Spirit, the writers of Scripture are describing all Christians. All believers are also called *"priests."*

You are a priest. You are a priest because, as a Christian, you have direct access to God without a human intermediary (*1 Timothy 2:5*). You, as a faithful disciple, are a priest because you have a holy work to perform. You are a priest, not because you have a job, but because you have engaged in a sacred vocation.

As priests, one of our primary tasks is to minister to each other as together we seek to live as Christians. We pray for each other. We teach and learn from each other. We care for each other. We forgive each other. And we give witness - to believers and nonbelievers alike - of the grace of God. All of these are priestly tasks.

As priests, we also have certain other responsibilities and understandings which we need to appreciate. I must be a good steward of my time and manage my time wisely to accomplish my tasks. I should make constructive use of the free time in-between patients, instead of whittling away the minutes and hours with unproductive activities. Being a priest involves diligence and self-motivation.

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ties that I do are indeed ministry. I know it may appear to be more spiritual to pray with a patient than to complete their insurance paperwork, but that paperwork allows the doors of your office to remain open so that you can treat those people suffering in pain that God sends to you. Every ministry site has the more mundane

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tasks, but without them being accomplished, the work of God would suffer, if not completely stop. It doesn't matter if we are vacuuming the floors or adjusting a subluxated sacroiliac joint, all we do falls in the realm of ministry if we are doing it for God.

Finally, being a priest also involves being visionary. A priest knows that without a vision the people will perish (Prov 29:18). A Priest knows who he is, to Whom he belongs, and to what God is calling him to do. A priest prayerfully discerns the will of God for the people. As chiropractors, we should seek God's will for our practices, for our families, and for our lives.

As we soon enter into the time celebrating the advent and nativity of our Lord, may we remember that we are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation. As God's own special people, may all that we do proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light. May it be so.