

Sunday November 5th sermon: "Our Offerings to God – A Royal Priesthood (Pt 1)"

Preached at the Lord's Table at Grace Bible Church in Greenwood, MS,
by John Pittman Hey

Matthew 21:15-16; Hebrews 13:20-21

The Bible nowhere teaches a concept of a liturgical priesthood in the church! Nowhere is a priest appointed to offer sacrifices for sin other than Christ!

The Roman Catholic catechism claims that Christ died to institute their blasphemous priesthood, so that we might have priests with us, now that Christ has died! But Christ is in fact still our high priest!

They claim the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice for our sin, when Christ has already taken away our sin by His sacrifice once for all.

Roman Catholic clerics blasphemously claim that their so-called priests "bring Christ down from His throne, and place Him upon our altar to be offered up again for the sins of man. The priest speaks, and lo, Christ the eternal and omnipotent God, bows his head in humble obedience to the priest's command."

They claim that Christ didn't have to die to save mankind, but rather did so in order to institute their priesthood! They conclude that their priests are "another Christ!"

But Hebrews makes it clear: any sacrifice that must be repeated, does not take away our sin! A repeated sacrifice that does not purge the sinner forever, serves only as a constant reminder of unforgiven sin.

Those who refuse the Mass, but trust only in the sacrifice that Jesus made for sinners, and in His exclusive presentation of His Own blood at the throne of God, have been made perfectly acceptable to God already.

Therefore, God is pleased to accept our offerings, not for our sin, but as praise, worship, obedience, and kind deeds done in Christ's name. Such offerings are well pleasing to our God.

Of course, our gifts to God can never match the glory and value of God's gift of Christ to us. Yet, God does desire to receive spiritual sacrifices from His loved ones!

Christ taught that even the widow's mite was accepted by God. Mary's costly ointment from the alabaster box anointing Christ was accepted with His high praise, and is to be remembered of her for all time. There can be nothing too extravagant for the worship and praise of our Savior!

Even the little children who praised Jesus with shouts asserting His glory as Messiah, were warmly embraced by Christ. The religious leaders tried to shut them up, but Christ pointed out that they fulfilled the prophecy, that God would perfect, unto Himself, praise from the mouths of babes!

If we love Him, Christ told us, we ought to keep His commandments, especially the love of the brethren, and to show kindness to each other.

In the great judgment, the Lord Jesus calls to mind the deeds of kindness done by His people to each other, and declares that He receives them as if done to Himself. So greatly does Christ identify Himself with His poor people, whom He came to redeem as our near Kinsman!

We are told to make our bodies living sacrifices to God, and in those imperfect bodies, to work hard, do good, be kind, serve the Lord, rejoice in hope, be fervent in prayer, and to give help to the Lord's people.

By Christ's blood, Hebrews instructs us, we will be made perfect in every good work to do God's will, to work what is well-pleasing to Him. Christ's blood not only perfects all who trust in Him, but it is the power that sanctifies us also.

We are like little children, too poor ourselves to give anything useful to our family and friends. That is why our parents gave us pocket money to

buy our gifts, and though they were simple and mostly useless, yet they were received by our parents and family with thanks and praise.

So too, we are incapable in ourselves of doing anything worthy of God's receiving, but God works in us to will and to do His good pleasure!

Any gifts, offerings, or sacrifices we make to God are only by the power of the Holy Ghost working in our hearts. He gives us all our gifts, which we then return to Him in thanksgiving and worship and praise.

We are created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works! Thus, God receives all the glory for our obedience and worship. These things do not CAUSE our justification and righteousness – those are from Christ alone. Rather, these things are the CONSEQUENCES of Christ's blood applied to us unto salvation.

That is why we work out our salvation with fear and trembling, when we recognize the mighty power flowing through us, that transforms us and motivates and propels us to will and to do His good pleasure.

These are just a part of God's gifts to His people, that He makes us willing and able to give good presents that are acceptable to Him.

In the end, all of our delight and worship and praise to Christ, is overwhelmed by God's love for us. God exults in His loved ones! He rejoices in joy over us! He joys over us with singing!

That is why God gave us His great gift of His Own Son, His dying to save us from our sins, and to change us little by little into His likeness.

What we are doing this morning at the Lord's Table is offering sacrifices of worship, praise, and thanksgiving to our God, and to the Lamb that was slain to redeem us.

Our high priest sits in glory even now, interceding for us, presenting His sacrifice that saved us, and God receives our thank offerings for Jesus' sake.

We have been made trophies of Christ's grace, by the glory of His death for us. Right now, in this meeting place, God is going about the business of perfecting praise by His little ones unto our Lord Jesus!

We love to sing Isaac Watts' great hymn:

Behold the glories of the Lamb
amidst the Father's throne!
Prepare new honors for His name,
and songs before unknown.

Ye elders worship at His feet,
the saints adore around,
with vials full of odors sweet,
and harps of sweetest sound.

To Thee, O Lamb, to Thee once slain
be endless blessings paid;
salvation, glory, joy, remain
forever on Thy head!