

Priesthood of All Believers

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The priesthood of all believers is a precious biblical doctrine. The basic idea of the word priest is “drawing near.” A priest is one who has been authorized by God to draw near unto Him to serve and to offer sacrifices and worship. Israel had a priesthood; but the church is a priesthood. All believers are priests unto God. First Peter 2:5; 2:9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10, 20:6 are some of the important verses on the priesthood of all believers. Priests are worshippers and servants. This applies to all believers in Christ. There is no distinction between clergy and laity in the NT. The church is called out as a holy and royal priesthood. There is no separate class or order within the church as priests. No special gift or position is required to act as a priest. Every believer is competent to stand before God and to draw near to His holy presence without the need of a human or angelic mediator or, ecclesiastical institution, because of his/her position and privileges in Christ as a priest. It is our birthright, a noble privilege and a solemn responsibility. All believers can perform the function of a priest – pray, worship, offer spiritual sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise, and give of their means to help others. The functions of NT priests include worship to God and intercession, prayer for all men, offer sacrifices to God – the sacrifice of oneself (one’s body, one’s life – Rom.12:1); Sacrifice of praise – Hebrews 13:15; sacrifice of material possessions and good works – Heb.13:16. Many churches that claim Reformation heritage have miserably failed in really practicing the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. This precious doctrine is clouded by clergy systems, and ritualistic hierarchical traditions. Others who believe and are committed to it often fail to demonstrate it powerfully and meaningfully. Being a priest does not mean one is a preacher or teacher and they twist this doctrine as preacherhood of all believers. Let us appreciate the true meaning of this doctrine and its privileges and draw near to God to offer acceptable worship, sacrifices and offerings that would glorify His Holy name.