**WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN - 6
The Christian is…A Priest**

**ACTS 11:26**

**INTRODUCTION** - As we continue our study of what it means to be a Christian, today we notice how the Christian is a priest.

 **I. We are called Priests**

a.  What is a priest? A priest is a servant assigned to approach God usually on behalf of others.

b.  ***The Christian is a Priest*** –

[**Rev. 1:5-6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Rev.%201.5-6) - **“*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.*”**

[**Rev. 5:10**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Rev.%205.10)**,** [**20:6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Rev%2020.6). (Note: The NAS family says, **“*Made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father.*”)**

[**1 Peter 2:4-5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Peter%202.4-5) - **“*Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you 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.*”**

**1 Peter 2:9-10 - “*But 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; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*”**
In these texts we find that now we are ALL priests of God. The Aaronic priesthood has been completed and replaced with the priesthood of Jesus

[**Heb. 7:11-19**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Heb.%207.11-19) - We all serve under Him and appeal directly to Him.

  **II. Our Duties as a Priest**

1. ***Enter into our duty*** – be washed. [**Heb. 10:19-22**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Heb.%2010.19-22) - **“*Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*”**
[**Exodus 30:20**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Exodus%2030.20)**,** [**Lev. 8:6-7**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Lev.%208.6-7) - Under the Levitical priesthood, before they could serve they had to wash to enter the tabernacle

**Heb. 8:2,5** - A study of types shows that the tabernacle of Israel was a type of the church

[**1 Cor. 3:16-17**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Cor.%203.16-17)**,** [**Eph. 2:21-22**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Eph.%202.21-22)**,** [**1 Peter 2:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Peter%202.5) – The temple a spiritual house,

**Acts 2:47, 22:16** - When we obey the gospel we are added to His church. Thus we enter into our priesthood.

b.  ***Provide a dwelling place for God*** – He is to dwell within us.
**1 Cor. 6:18-20** - Just as the Levites maintained the tabernacle/temple, so we are to provide a place for God to dwell. It is WITHIN US! – our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.
[**1 Pet. 2:4**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Pet.%202.4) being built up a spiritual house. In this we are reminded to keep ourselves pure.
[**Lev. 21:16-23**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Lev.%2021.16-23)**,** [**22:3-9**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Lev%2022.3-9) - A study of the Levitical priesthood demanded purity. In fact one who was deformed or defiled could not serve as priest - Before entering to serve they had to wash themselves, etc. While we compare this to baptism.
[**1 Cor. 6:19-20**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Cor.%206.19-20)**,** [**1 John 3:3**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20John%203.3)**,** [**1 Peter 1:22**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Peter%201.22) - We are to be pure – again
[**James 1:27**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%201.27) - speaks of pure and undefiled religion involves, “keep oneself unspotted from the world.”
**Romans 8:9** - describes how the spirit of God dwells within us. This is in a passage where Paul is calling for us to live according to the Spirit rather than according to the flesh **(8:1, 5-8).**
- Purity helps us ensure that our prayers are not hindered.
- Purity helps us serve God with a clear conscience.
- Purity makes our worship and service acceptable to God!
[**1 Cor. 3:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Cor.%203.16) **&** [**Ephesians 2:19-22**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ephesians%202.19-22) - describes how the church is also the temple of the Lord and a dwelling place for God. We (Christians) are the church! We serve as priests within this “temple”.

c.  ***Offer Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God*** – [**1 Peter 2:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Peter%202.5).
One of the primary functions of the priests was to offer sacrifices. There were at least 5 different types of sacrifices to be offered (Burnt offering, grain offering, peace offering, sin offering and trespass offering
Similarly in scripture we have different sacrifices.

   i. Praising God – [**Heb. 13:15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Heb.%2013.15) – when we worship Him properly, it is a sacrifice of praise.

   ii. Good works – [**Hebrews 13:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Hebrews%2013.16) calls for us to do good and to share. We need to be thinking about others. [**James 1:27**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%201.27) describes “pure and undefiled religion” in terms of helping others and living a pure life.
[**Titus 2:14**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Titus%202.14) “***who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*”**

   iii. Supporting the preaching of the gospel - Paul commends the church at Philippi for helping him to preach the gospel. He describes it in terms of fellowship –[**Phil. 4:15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Phil.%204.15)**,** [**1:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Phil%201.5).

 **Phil. 4:18** - In this verse we read, **“*Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.*”** God is pleased with such sacrifices.

   iv. **Rom. 12:1** - Our living bodies - **“*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*”** We give ourselves to God.

 [**Galatians 2:20**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Galatians%202.20) - it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.
**Romans 6:12-14 - “*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*”**

   v.     **Phil. 2:17** - Even our lives - “***Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.*”**

 **Acts 21:23** - Paul was willing to die for his Lord.

 **2 Tim. 4:6** - Toward the end of his life he says he says, **“*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.*”** - but he’s ready.
**Rev. 2:10** - We are encouraged in to be faithful until death (both until we die and unto the point of death) so that we can receive the crown of life.

d.   ***We are to proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness***.
[**1 Peter 2:9**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Peter%202.9) – Again describes us as belonging to God, being His own special people – so that we can proclaim His praises. A necessity of serving as a priest was knowledge of the Law.

 **1 Pet. 3:15** - We too need that knowledge. We have also seen how the priest helped the people understand the Law – we too help others understand God’s will.

[**Romans 15:15-16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Romans%2015.15-16) -We find Paul writing and explaining how he is a minister of Jesus Christ, ministering the gospel to the Gentiles, **“*that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified in the Holy Spirit*.”** Paul taught so that others too could share in his blessings as a priest.

**CONCLUSION** –

As Christians we are priests of God.

How are we living our lives as priests?

 Are you faithfully serving God in His priesthood?