

**Growth Group Study**  
**Identity, Royal Priesthood**

7 4 2019 – John Malcolm

Bible Readings: Exodus 19.1-6 & 1 Peter 2.4-10

**The minister gave an illustration of going to a restaurant for a special occasion, looking forward to a relaxing meal, but being asked to wipe the tables, hand out menus, cook his own food and then do the dishes.**

Why would we not expect this to happen when we go out for a meal at a restaurant?

Why would we be unlikely to return to a restaurant like this?

**The minister said, a pervasive human problem is that we tend to want to be served, rather than to serve.**

Heather approached church wanting to be served, over time this made her miserable and she left the church because it did not do what she expected and so did not *meet* her needs. While attending another church she was challenged about her attitude. She realised, not only was the attitude not helping her, it was actually robbing her of joy. She said, *That's it! That's why I was so miserable at church. I focused on my wants and needs. I did not focus on serving others.* (*I Will* by Thom Rainer)

Compare/contrast the restaurant experience with going to church with Heather's consumer mindset?

What do you think this attitude would do, not just to the individual with it, but to the church he/she attended?

**Read Mark 9:33–35**

What does this story reveal about the attitude of the disciples and why was that a problem?

Do you think Jesus was really serious in his response?

What do you think Jesus was trying to teach his disciples?

**Read Exodus 28.1, 29.44-46 & Numbers 18.7**

Consider the Old Testament tent of meeting or temple – what was the task of the priests?

What did priests do to serve God?

What did they do to serve the people?

**Read Exodus 19:5–6 & 1 Peter 2:5 & 9**

What titles are used in Exodus to describe the people of Israel?

How are these like the titles Peter used in his letter?

Why do you think Peter applied these titles to the church of his day?

In the reformation *the priesthood of all believers* became a core doctrine that shaped the protestant church. What is the practical outworking of this doctrine for us in our day?

There is more to being part of the royal priesthood than service, which is our focus today. If time allows at the end of the study, what more would you want to say about this priesthood?

**Read Romans 12.1 & 1 Peter 2.5**

In what ways might this *spiritual house* Peter mentions be like the Old Testament temple?

What do you Peter means when he speaks of *living stones*?

Why does Peter speak of *offering spiritual sacrifices* and what connection do you see between these and the sacrifices of the Old Testament?

In the church of Peter's day who was to make these *spiritual sacrifices*?

What is the link between Peter's *spiritual sacrifices* and Paul's *living sacrifices*? (How might this apply to us in our lives?)

**Read Hebrews 4.14 & 10.21-22**

What do these verses reveal to us about Jesus?

In what sense is Jesus the great high priest, and how does this help us draw near to God?

**Read Mark 10.45 & Phil 2.5- 8**

What do these verses help us understand about Jesus?

What can we learn from Jesus' example?

Why do you think greatness is measured differently in the Kingdom of God?

If the great high priest is also the greatest servant what does this tell us about our priesthood and service as Christians?

**At the Sunday service it was said, *We are royal priests who are members of a royal priesthood.***

What does this tell us about the corporate nature of our priesthood and service?

What difference do you think it makes to the life of a church when church members gather with an attitude of service?

The minister stated, *When we are serving God and his family sacrificially it is the most Christ-like we can be.* If this is true what might it mean for us and our church?

**For personal reflection:**

Where would you place yourself on the scale below?

Corporately, where would you place the life of our church on this scale?

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10  
(Willing to serve) (Wanting to be served)

What do you find most fulfilling about serving God and his people?

What is one thing you could do this week as an act of service?