

BFF325 Priests Unto God, You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood.

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: I am starting to feel a little normal. I've been up for several hours, trying to wake up.

Scott: Do you do jumping jacks to do that, or what?

Steve: No. I get up, and ate a little something. I made some green tea, read my Bible and prayed through my prayer list. I just did, you might say, my dutiful things.

I had a wonderful week, a full week last week. I spoke many times. In fact, every day from Monday through Friday, I had a meeting.

Scott: Where were you?

Steve: Monday night, I was at a homeschool support group, and then Tuesday, we had our podcast. Then Wednesday, I spoke as part of an online seminar. Then Thursday, Friday, Saturday, I was in Illinois and spoke 8 times. I really enjoy being in Illinois. I've been going there for almost 20 years.

Scott: Wow.

Steve: There were people there that I knew as teenagers, and now they're back homeschooling their children.

Scott: That's awesome.

Steve: Probably the biggest blast from the past occurred when a man stood in front of me smiling with a beard. He said, "I think I was one of your first students." He was six and a half when I had just started writing worksheets for Math-U-See. His mom helped me by truing it out on her children.

I looked at him, I looked at his name tag, and I remembered his mother's name and what she looked like. He almost fell over. That was...Are you ready for this? Over 30 years ago.

Scott: We just graduated my oldest son from high school this past weekend.

Steve: Congratulations.

Scott: Thank you. My wife deserves all the credit, most of the credit anyway. We started using Math-U-See when he was around kindergarten or first grade.

Steve: Wow.

Scott: Not quite 30 years but, you know...

Steve: I agree with you though, that the moms need to get more credit. I have had the privilege of speaking at homeschool graduations, and I've tried to make not just a point about that, but I often have the moms stand up.

Honor needs to be given especially those moms who have home educated several children. They're probably the smartest people in the audience because they've taught several children in many differing disciplines.

They've taught history, they've taught science. They've taught them how to read, they've taught them how to do math. Then they do it again, and they do it again. Wonderful people.

Scott: I came up with a great strategy to keep me from bawling like a baby at this graduation, because I pretty much did that at my daughter's graduation, just fell apart. It was ugly.

We did a ceremony with four other families that we had been in co-op with over the years. It's such a really meaningful ceremony. I get up there with my wife, and I say a few things. I told one of my friends the other day, "All right, Mike, if I start crying, you need to heckle me." He said "All right, I'll start yelling out-Crybaby."

Scott: There was one moment when I choked up, and I started pointing at him. He just laughed. Anyway, it worked and I made it through.

Steve: Amen. You and your wife are faithful parents.

Scott: We try.

Steve: Let's pray. Father, thank you for these wonderful families that have been seeking to represent You in their homes, and faithfully raise their children to the glory of God. Thank You for the moms that have put in so much effort and time, and invested their very lifeblood. Thank You for the dads that have faithfully supported their wives and their children. Thank You for faithfully bearing us up, and praying for us, because You are the faithful high priest, and You are ever living right now to pray for us. Thank You for praying for us today. Thank You that You're praying for us during this podcast. We draw near to You, and ask You to have Your will done today on earth just as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: These studies are having a tremendous impact on me. I hope that others are being blessed as well. I thought I might share a little bit about how they're impacting me before we dive into the Holy of Holies.

I was sitting in church Sunday, and one of the first scripture readings was from John 14:23 where Jesus says, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

I read that, and I thought, "He's going to tabernacle with us. He's going to live with us. He's going to come and "meno," or remain and abide with us." It turns out this word "home," in the Greek is only used twice, but it comes from the root word of "meno" which we know is to abide.

I thought, God is going to tabernacle with us. He's going to live with us. Way back when we started this study about 30 studies ago, we went at it with the idea that we were going to learn more about Jesus.

John 5: 39, "You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, it is they that bear witness about Me." We talked about the word

"revelation" in the New Testament, which in the Greek is "apocalypse" or "apokálypsis."

When we think about apocalypse, we think about fascinating, maybe that's not the right word. We think of astounding events which are going to shake the earth. There's going to be an apocalypse. Yet the word means "revelation." The first five words of the book of Revelation are, "the revelation of Jesus Christ."

I have been praying Ephesians 1:17 which uses the same word when it says, "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him."

I want to understand, I want to have a revelation, an understanding. I want to see Jesus, and know Him. That's what Paul was praying for the church there. I want that. We went into this study of the tabernacle with this mindset that we're going to see Jesus. We're going to understand Him better, and we're going to understand this concept of tabernacle and why it's so important.

Acts 7, Stephen says, "Our fathers had the tent of witness in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern that he had seen." The tabernacle was referred to as the tent of witness. The word for "witness" is "marturein," "marturion," some form of that word. Jesus is the faithful witness. We determined to study this tent of witness with the mindset that we're going to understand more about Jesus.

We haven't talked much about the priests at all, except what their function was. We haven't talked about their unique garments. The fact is, God has called us to be priests. I'm going to read a couple of verses. 1 Peter 2:4-5 says, "As you come to Him a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious. You yourselves, like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

You and I can learn from studying these priests because we have been called to be priests, but we're priests under the new covenant, and not under the old covenant. I'm really seeking God about this because I want to be a faithful priest.

By the way, that expression "faithful priest" was used to describe Samuel. He says, "I will raise up from myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in My heart and in My mind." May God help us to be faithful priests who do according to what is on God's heart and in God's mind. I want to be tuned to heaven and have my mind and my heart lined up with God.

Speaking of Jesus, it says in Hebrews 2, "Therefore, He had to be made like His brothers in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God to make propitiation for the sins of the people."

This last study that we did on the incense is what brought it together many of these thoughts for me. I noticed that He, the priest, was going to go in and burn fragrant incense. It says in Exodus 30:7-8, "Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it. Every

morning, when he dresses the lamps, he shall burn it. When Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it. A regular incense offering before Jehovah throughout your generations."

As I'm reading this verse, I'm thinking, he had this daily duty twice to go in, he was to burn incense at the same time that he was taking care of the lamps. He did the same thing in the afternoon, at twilight, between noon and the sun going down.

As I read these verses I was reminded of Exodus 29, which we covered several weeks ago, where it says, "This is what you shall offer on the altar, two lambs, a year old, day-by-day regularly. One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight."

Three things that Aaron did twice a day. He filled the lamps with oil, he burnt incense, and he offered a lamb, a year-old, a perfect lamb, and it describes the sacrifice. You put it with a grain offering and a drink offering for a pleasing aroma.

"It shall be a burnt offering, a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before Jehovah, where I will meet with you to speak to you there. There I will meet with the people of Israel. It shall be sanctified by my glory. I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar."

"Aaron also, and his sons, I will consecrate to serve me as priests. I will dwell among the people of Israel." He's going to abide with them, he's going to make his home there. "I will be their God, and they shall know that I am Jehovah their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell or tabernacle among them. I am Jehovah, their God."

This picture that this all pulls together for me is that you and I have been called to be priests. We have called to be faithful priests under the new covenant which He set in motion. Then He calls us to be priests, faithful priests, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

What I have found myself doing in the last week is seeking to be a faithful priest and try to remember to apply these callings twice a day. I have this attitude that I now am a priest according to what Jesus has done for us and I want to offer spiritual sacrifices.

Paul tells us to rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all things. I think these are priestly duties for each of us. I want to represent my generation before God.

We know that Aaron walked into the tabernacle with his incredible embroidered garments. He had, on his chest, stones, and these stones represented the 12 tribes of Israel. Part his responsibility as the priest of Israel, was to bring these 12 tribes before God every day.

As a dad, I have thought of making a vest and put stones on it, with the names of my family. I want to come into God's presence bearing their names on my chest, as I pray for my family almost every day.

I bring their names before God, and I want to remind Him that these people need His help, they need His blessing. Sometimes I pray, "Father, give us this day our daily bread." Sometimes I pray, "Deliver us from evil," and apply what He taught us in the prayer He gave to His disciples.

Sometimes I pray the Aaronic Benediction, "Jehovah bless you and keep you, Jehovah make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto You. Jehovah lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace, So shall they put my name on the children of Israel."

So these are the kind of things that Aaron did, this is the kind of things that I want to bring up to date for not only my family, but also when I pray for the world in which I live.

This is something that he has put on my heart to be praying for six days a week. I bear them before God. I take this very seriously, but because I'm a priest according to Jesus. He calls me a priest, and I want to live up to His calling. I want to be faithful. I feel like that's part of what the devil does to all of us is, he makes us small in our own eyes, which in one sense is not a bad thing as it keeps us humble.

On the other hand, we don't want to look at God's work on our life as small. If He calls us to be priests, then we're priests. If He calls us to stand by Him and pray, and believe in Him, then that's exactly what I want to do.

Yesterday I was out walking, and I was praying. I don't have to offer up sacrifices now, because Jesus is the sacrifice. It says in John, "This is the work of God, that you believe whom He has sent." John 6:29.

I want to do the work of God. I want to believe. As I was walking I said, "I believe that the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world. I believe that the Lamb of God takes away the sins of the world. I believe that the Lamb of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil.

"I believe that every knee is going to bow, and every tongue is going to confess that Jesus is Lord." I'm mixing faith with the promises of God. This is how I've been led so far. I'm not accomplished at this activity, but I am pursuing this because these studies have helped me see Jesus in a new way.

These studies have helped me to see the tabernacle as a foretaste of things to come. Let me read Revelation 7:9-12. "After this, I looked and behold a great multitude that no one could number from every nation. From all tribes, peoples, and languages standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands. Crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.'

"All the angels were standing around the throne, and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped saying, 'Amen, blessing and honor, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen.'"

Then one of the elders," this is the 13th verse now, "Addressed me saying, 'Who are these clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?' I said to him, 'Sir, you know.'

"He said to me, 'These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, they are before the throne of God.'"

These redeemed people are before the throne of God. It goes on to say, "And serve him day and night in his temple. He who sits on the throne will shelter them." You know what that literally means? He will spread His tabernacle over and shelter them. "He will shelter them with his presence."

Let me keep reading it. It even gets better, if possible 1 Peter 2:9, "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood." Peter talking to the believers, "A holy nation, a people for his own possession."

Revelation 1: 5-6, "Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, firstborn of the dead and the ruler of Kings on earth. To Him who loves us and is freed us from our sins by His blood and made us a kingdom priests to His God and Father."

Revelation 5: 9-10, "They sang a new song saying, 'Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open the seals for you were slain, and by Your blood, You ransomed people for God, from every tribe and language and people and nations, and You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God and they shall reign on the earth.'"

This is who we are, Scott, because of what Jesus has done for us. He has made us a kingdom. He's made us priests. This is the word of God. The word of God cannot change. It cannot be broken. Heaven and earth are going to pass away, but God's word will never pass away.

I'm preaching to myself right now. If you can't tell this, I'm trying to get this. He has made us and called us to be priests. We've got images from this tabernacle, and from Aaron, and from his sons that help us. Ultimately, we're looking to Jesus, who is the faithful witness. He is the high priest. We're worshiping Him, we're believing in Him, we're serving Him.

Revelation 7 gives us a picture of what we're going to be doing when we get to heaven. I think we can start right now. We can worship Him, and believe in Him, and honor Him, and say, "OK, we feel pretty small in our own eyes. We feel pretty beaten up. We're just trying to get through day to day, do the best we can."

He smiles and says, "Yeah, but you're my priests." All right, there you go. It's up to you now to figure out how we're going to close this baby.

Scott: I was just looking up the word "sacrifice" and on all the times it's used in the New Testament. It's one of those things I always shy away from because most of the verses are about how there wasn't a need for sacrifice anymore after Jesus came. That He had been our final sacrifice and is, and yet there are those verses about bringing a sacrifice of praise in Hebrews.

Then in 1 Peter offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. I have a hard time wrapping my head around the idea of being a priest and bringing sacrifices, and all that. It feels very religious in my head...

Steve: I'm sorry.

Scott: My main ministry training background was in college ministry. It's like, "Hey dude, what's up? You ever heard about Jesus?" There's not a lot of thinking about yourself as a priest in that context. This is new ground again for me. Thank you.

Steve: Every time we pray, that's what priests do. Every time we worship, that's what priests do. Every time we faithfully discharge our duties as parents and teach our children. We're teaching priests, we're representing God to our people, and we're representing people to God.

This is what priests do. This is good though. Thank you for your candor as always, but it's been a long podcast. Let's pray.

Father, thank you. This is a lot for us to wrap our heads around, but I pray that You'll give us, as Paul prayed. Right in the beginning, we talked about this from Ephesians 1. May God give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. May God give us the faithful heart that Samuel had, who did what was on God's heart and in His mind.

We're entering into a period of our history that has never been lived before, and yet we're not counting on our own chutzpah, so to speak, but we're counting on Your divine calling, what You've done for us, You're praying for us, and I believe You've washed our feet.

You've set us apart as priests, not only to our home, but to this generation. Help us to figure that out, help us to walk in it, and help us to be faithful in it, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at [spdemme@gmail.com](mailto:spdemme@gmail.com). If you have a question for me, you can reach me at [scott@unsocializedmedia.com](mailto:scott@unsocializedmedia.com). Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.