

BFF353 Priests Teach

Steve Demme: Priests not only worship, and serve, and minister, and pray, and fight spiritual warfare, priests teach.

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 well, but I'm really anxious to hear how you are, and your blessed one-pound, three-ounce grandson.

Scott: Yeah, I was just saying it feels like it's been a year since you and I have talked. Kind of a lot's happened since last Tuesday. Henry was born at 24 weeks, which is not ideal. For those of you counting, that's 16 weeks early, and one pound, three ounces.

He's tiny, and he looks...My wife and I have different ways of communicating, and under stressful situations, our personality differences come up very quickly. She looks at him and he's like, "Oh, he's so perfect, he's so wonderful, he's so beautiful and perfect, and everything's right." I look at him, and I'm like, "He needs to cook for a lot longer."

Scott: Have you heard about the revival that sprung up at Asbury?

Steve: Yes.

Scott: That began on Wednesday. A friend of ours drove up with some other friends to join in the worship. She called her mom, crying, saying, "Mom, they prayed for Henry at Asbury." She was with one of the pastors there and asked him to pray for Henry. He was like, "Yeah, let's pray for Henry." The whole place prayed for Henry, which was awesome.

My son goes to Cedarville. They were having their chapel yesterday and my son Luke was right near the president of the university who was speaking and felt led to ask him to pray for Henry. He just like, "Yeah, let's pray for Henry."

Steve: That's awesome. We're going to pray, too. In fact, we're going to start by praying for Henry. Father, thank You for this little boy. Thank You for Your creation. There's a reason that he came out soon. We don't know what. We wish he could be in the oven longer, but here he is.

Now You who began this good work in Abby's womb, I pray that You'll bring it to completion, and You'll heal and help Henry to grow and grow well and grow to the glory of God, and let his life be a testimony to those in the hospital, and to all who hear that God is alive and God is able to do miraculous things.

Bless God and Jen, bless Luke and all the other siblings. Bless and keep them in the palm of Your hand. Bless Abby and her husband and hold them. Give them protection. We have a mean enemy who does not let up, but we have a great God who also does not let up. In fact, greater is He that is in us than He that is in the world.

I ask You to deliver us from evil. I ask You to lead us in paths of life and righteousness. In Jesus' name, and bless our which seemed small deliberations today on this podcast. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen. Thank you.

Steve: OK, priests teach. How's that for a topic?

Scott: Sounds good to me.

Steve: It's interesting how this came to my mind because I keep thinking that we're done with our priestly studies, and God keeps giving me new stuff. Then I start digging, and I find all kinds of things. What reminded me of this right in the beginning was Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 17, who said, in the third year of his reign, sent his officials to teach in the cities. The Levites, who he mentions, and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests, who taught in Judah, having the book of the law of Jehovah with them, and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

This is something that Jehoshaphat had on his heart. This is a great move, for if we're going to reform our nation, we need to send out Levites and priests to teach the law of our God. If we're going to have a theocracy where Jehovah is on the throne, we need to teach the people.

It wasn't enough that Jehoshaphat knew the law, he wanted the people to know the law, and that's powerful. Then in Ezra, when they're reforming the nation, Ezra and Nehemiah, and Joshua the high priest, and Zechariah all came back to Israel after having been in Babylon for 70 years. As they're rebuilding the city it says, in the eighth chapter of Nehemiah, "All the people gathered as one man at the square," which was in front of the Watergate, "and they asked Ezra, the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Jehovah had given to Israel.

"Then Ezra, the priest, brought the law before the assembly of men, women, and all who could listen with understanding." Then it says, "He read, and those who could understand were attentive to the book of the law. He stood at a wooden podium. Everybody else stood up," and, "Ezra blessed Jehovah, the great God.

"All the people answered, 'Amen, amen,' while lifting up their hands. They bowed low and worshiped Jehovah with their faces to the ground." "Also these Levites explained the law to the people while the people remained in their place. They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading."

Ezra read it, but then he had 13 Levitical experts on the law, who probably worked with Ezra, and these fellows read from the book, and they probably broke up this huge assembly in smaller groups, 13 small groups.

Steve: They gave the sense. I like that expression. They gave the sense. This is what Ezra just read. Then they explained it and translated it until that little light bulb went on and the people understood the reading.

Ezra 7:10, "Ezra had set his heart to study the law of Jehovah and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel." That always impacts me when I'm reading the book of Ezra, that Ezra had this on his heart. God put it on his heart. He was going to be

well-versed in the Word of God. And all these Levites and priests, I'm sure, went to Ezra, and he taught them.

When they had the sense of it, he made them small group leaders, so to speak. He passed on to others and equipped them to teach the laws of God.

Josiah kept the Passover, in 2 Chronicles 35, "And he appointed the priests to their office, encouraged them in the service of the house of Jehovah, and he said to the Levites, who taught all Israel and who were holy to Jehovah."

As I'm praying about this topic, I'm thinking, "Boy, where else in the Bible besides these situations do priests teach?" I remembered that one of the first priests that we have is Moses.

Moses writes and God speaks, "Gather the people to me," in Deuteronomy 4, "that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children also."

Two chapters later, Moses directs parents, "Teach them diligently to your children, and talk of them, when you sit in your house, walk by the way, lie down, and rise up." Deuteronomy 11, "You shall teach them to your children." This is something that Moses did. It's important for the parents to hear the Word of God so they will love God and they will fear God, but it's also important that they teach them to their children.

Of course, Jesus is the great priest, and Moses is a type of Christ. He's a priest. David himself, I believe, was a priest, and he taught the people how to give thanks. It says he appointed the Levites to invoke, to thank, and praise Jehovah.

As you read through the Psalms, you're going to find out it wasn't only David that wrote Psalms, it was Asaph and the sons of Korah as well.

Now, what did Jesus, our great high priest, do? Luke says in Acts 1, "O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach."

Jesus taught us in the Beatitudes. He went up into a mountain, sat down, opened his mouth and taught them." Then we ended up with the Sermon on the Mount. In the 11th chapter of Matthew, "When Jesus had finished instructing his 12 disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities."

Matthew 13, "He taught them in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, 'Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?'" Mark expands on that when he says, "They were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one who had authority and not as the scribes."

He wasn't just flapping his lips and filling the air, he taught them wisdom. He taught them with authority. Everybody's heart was stirred when they listened to Jesus teach. It says another place, "As was his custom, he taught. He taught them while sitting in a boat."

His disciples specifically asked him, 'Teach us to pray.'" So, he taught them how to pray, and because of that question you and I have the Lord's prayer or the Disciples' prayer.

He sat in the temple and taught them. Then it says two more verses about Jesus teaching. John 8:28, "Jesus said to them, when you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He and that I do nothing on My own authority, but speak just as the Father taught Me."

John 18:20, "I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple where all the Jews came together. I have said nothing in secret." Then, just like Moses did, Matthew 28:18–20, Jesus said to them, "All authority on earth has been given to me."

As I read this, think of the disciples as priests. "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all that I had commanded you."

The disciples were not only to follow Jesus, they were to be teachers, they were to be baptizers, they were to be the ones that established the church. This is what the disciples were commissioned to do because they were priests, they were priests of the new kingdom, as followers of Christ.

I think Moses makes it very clear that parents are to be the priests of the home and are to be the ones teaching their children.

Paul, who was a disciple, and a follower of Jesus says, "When you're picking out the guys to lead your church, here are some characteristics," this is Steve international version "they need to be a husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach." 1 Timothy 3.

In 2 Timothy 2, he says, "What you have heard from me, in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

Keep your eyes and ears open, for people who are able to teach others because this is something that needs to be replicated and passed on.

When you think about the fact that here we are in 2023, and this movement started 2000 years ago, it works. Jesus taught His disciples, he said to his disciples, "You make other disciples, you baptize them, you teach them."

Paul is doing the same thing as he's planting churches all over Asia Minor, he says, "Keep your eyes open. Look for the people that can teach and pass this on."

In Titus, the third of what we call the "Pastoral Epistles" He says to Titus, "As for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine."

When you think about all that has transpired in the last couple thousand years, and all the ups and downs of the church, it is evident the good Holy Spirit has been managing the church, for He's the one who teaches us what to teach. The Holy Spirit has faithfully been picking out people that can understand the Word of God, understand sound doctrine, and pass it on to others.

Ultimately, I believe this is what we're supposed to do. We are all followers of Jesus. We're not just sitting in the back row. He wants us to sit right up front and learn this stuff well, pass it on, and begin in our home. This is one of the qualifications for

overseers or bishops in the church, learn to teach our own kids, and then pass it on to others.

Priests not only worship, serve, minister, pray, and fight spiritual warfare, priests teach. There you go, brother. Got any energy to respond to that?

Scott: Well, I just did a quick search when you started talking to see what verses have this in there, and you hit most of the ones that came up. I find it interesting, though, that in Acts 4 it says, when they wanted to stop the disciples, it says they called them in and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

Steve: That command wasn't obeyed. One of the things that I've discovered a long time ago when I was a dad trying to teach the Word of God my children. In our family devotion times, we simply would pray, invite God's Spirit to be in our midst, and then we would read the Word of God and talk about it.

We would really just open ourselves up to be taught. The more that the parent takes the initiative to teach, the more they get out of it. You just do. Everybody knows that. I've asked this question so many times, and people say the same answer. "Who gets the most out of a Sunday school lesson, if you happen to be a Sunday school teacher?"

Everybody says, "The Sunday school teacher," because they've spent time preparing and putting things together, to know the material before they teach it. This is one of the fruits.

Steve: I interviewed a family in Florida, and they started having family worship, which led to the husband leading worship in their local church, which led to them having a witness in their community and inviting people to their home to worship.

It started with the husband accepting his responsibility to teach his own children, and it transformed not only their family, it is now transforming their community. Great story.

Scott: That's awesome.

Steve: Yeah. In fact, we've got that one on Zoom, so if people want to see this couple, which is worth seeing because they glow. It was a delightful interview. I was blessed watching how they both built each other up and didn't interrupt each other, didn't correct each other. They just smiled and loved on each other while the film was going. They've got seven children from 2 to 20. It's not like they have a lot of extra time for sleep. OK, let's wrap this up.

Father, thank You for this calling to not only be a disciple, but to be a discipler. To not only be someone who is taught, but someone who teaches. Help us to accept this mantle that You have placed, are placing, or perhaps inviting us to be clothed in.

This mantle of being not only a worshiper and a standbys and all the things that we've already covered as a priest, but help us to be faithful teachers of Your word to our families, to those in our sphere of influence, so that we can be fulfilling that calling on our lives as well as the others. 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. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocializedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.