

Exod 05-03-06b

We pick up our study now in Exodus chapter 30, at least centered there, Exodus 29 and 30. Looking at the priests, we've examined the setup, their clothing, their consecration, the sacrifices involved, the anointing. The ceremony of consecration that we have reviewed here was repeated initially, if you look at Exodus 29 and 35, for seven days.

Seven, of course, is the number of teleiosis, completion. And the idea is that the span of time that God has assigned to you and to me for the exercise of our priesthood in this life is exactly right. If we follow the Word of God, if we heed the call and walk by faith and not by sight, our experience in this life is going to bring us to the standard of a mature man that you find described in Ephesians chapter 4. It is in the exercise of our priesthood as well as our ministry to one another and our ambassadorship to the world as salt and light that completes us.

And so the fact that this consecration ceremony is repeated for seven days speaks of complete consecration, complete dedication. It is fullness, it is perfect. We are to present ourselves as living sacrifices, Romans 12 again.

1 Corinthians 6, 19 and 20, Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body. The additional phrase there, and in your spirit, which I think is a helpful gloss that someone added a little bit later in the history of the text.

We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit on a continuing basis. Romans chapter 8, verse 9, You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of Christ dwells in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

There is a difference in having the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit dwelling. Just as you discern a difference between seeing the kingdom of God and entering the kingdom of God. And this distinction has been overlooked in a lot of study of the Word.

So that people don't recognize that when he says, If you don't have the Spirit of Christ, you are not his. That is talking about salvation. But if the Spirit dwells in you, dwells in you effectively, dwells in you with some influence.

I do not like the phraseology that you find in a lot of Christian writing and preaching and so on that says controlled by the Spirit. We are never controlled by the Spirit. There was a book, I think Tim LaHaye, before his left behind days, decades before that, had written his books about the temperaments, phlegmatic and choleric and melancholy and sanguine.

And this led to a whole flurry of studies about Spirit-controlled temperament. Your temperament is not Spirit-controlled. God does not take control of us.

We are indwelt, we are filled, we have the ministry of the Holy Spirit who will bring to our minds

truth, who will lead us. But you can have a great leader and people do not follow. Just look at the world around us.

Look at the presidency of the United States. We have a great leader and we have a lot of people who refuse to follow, who refuse to acknowledge, who can think of nothing better to do than just denigrate the man instead of recognizing that God has blessed us with somebody who actually knows how to conduct government. Just my opinion.

But you can call, not all will answer. You can lead, not all will follow. Jesus said, my sheep hear my voice, talking to Israel, and they come when I call.

That's obedience. So in the same way we present ourselves, we have that opportunity. God has given us the Spirit and it's available.

But having the Spirit is not enough. He has to effectively dwell. The indwelling of the Spirit never leaves us.

It morphs over into the sealing of the Spirit. The indwelling is permanent just as the sealing is permanent. But, and again, without trying to make the terms technical, the indwelling of the Spirit ought to move in the direction of filling.

It ought to move in the direction of our being responsive and heedful of His leading, of His ministry of the Word to our hearts. Philippians 1, 20 and 21. Paul says, it's my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed.

It isn't a sure thing. It isn't a given. He says, I earnestly expect and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always.

So now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For me to live is Christos, to die is gain. Should I live? Should I die? Living is good, dying is better.

On the one hand, I'd like to depart and be with the Lord. On the other hand, it's needful for me to be here, remain with you, teach, fulfill the function of apostleship. We exist for God's glory.

Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. We are indwelt by Him for the purpose of reflecting God's glory. The sacrifice is holy because it is set apart to God to be used for righteousness.

That's the nature of our anointing. It has a specific purpose. It's not a get-rich-quick scheme.

Give to my ministry. God will open the windows of heaven and bless you. Sow your seed into my pocket and wait for some indeterminate time in the future for God to bless.

This is the message you get on a lot of Christian ministries. These things that God has given us are to be used in the fulfillment of the plan of God. So, we talked also in the past about disqualifying from service.

What disqualified a priest if he acquired some sort of deficiency. If he was born with a deficiency, he could not serve as a priest. A priest had to reflect purity.

And that was symbolic, not of physical purity in this age, but of being cleansed and being purified. So now, we move into the daily operations of a priest. How did that whole thing work? Well, priests were enjoined not to disqualify themselves, either temporarily or permanently.

So, for example, they were not to take part in funerals. Why is that? Well, you have in Leviticus chapter 21, and you may want to turn here because a lot of the ongoing operation of the priesthood is contained in Leviticus 21 and 22. The Lord said to Moses, Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them, Leviticus 21, None shall defile himself for the dead among his people, except for his relatives who are nearest him, his mother, father, son, daughter, brother, virgin sister, who has no husband.

For her he may defile himself. Otherwise he shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people, to profane himself, being a master. This is the same word that is used for husband in Hebrew.

Being the person who sets the example. That's what a husband and father are supposed to do in the household. That's what disqualified a man from being an elder in the church, is not ruling well his own household, setting a bad example, prone to anger, given to drink, not a one-woman man, etc.

Being a chief man, he is not to defile himself. It was common for pagan priests to slash themselves, to cover themselves with dung, to do all kinds of weird things when somebody died. And God said, not my priests.

No circumstance of life justifies defiling yourself as a priest. That same principle holds true today. Well, what does that really mean? How could we defile ourselves and disqualify ourselves to function in our priesthood? Well, what does Hebrews chapter 10 say about approach to God? A pure heart, full assurance of faith, your heart having been sprinkled from an evil conscience, your body washed with pure water.

Jesus talked about this in terms of bearing grudges and not forgiving people. You defile yourself for the dead. What about looking around at the world and the unbelievers and the evil, even believers who are functioning in circles of evil? We can defile ourselves for the dead in the sense of looking around at the things that do not partake of spiritual life and getting too wrapped up in them, can't we? It's an easy thing to do.

It's a slippery slope. Just by moving around in the world, you say, well, I have righteous indignation. Well, that's good up to a point, but Scripture also says, let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

Don't create an agenda. Don't start a crusade against one particular thing or another. Why? It's defiling yourself on account of the dead.

And God says, don't do it. So we have a responsibility not only to understand our priesthood, how it started, what it means, and how it works, but also to preserve our priesthood. Preserving our priesthood means do not voluntarily expose yourself to things that defile.

It's a huge problem. We've talked about it many times. It's documented all over the world.

There's a huge problem with pornography. The Internet has just made that worse. You have to work at not being assaulted with filthiness when you get on the Internet.

You have to work hard in media. You have to work hard when you're selecting movies to watch or television programs to watch or television stations to watch. You may be trying to watch some innocuous nature documentary, but the commercials for that station assault you with immorality, with provocative and lewd material.

And we have a responsibility to preserve our priesthood. There is a principle in many areas, particularly the computer realm, G.I.G.O. Garbage in, garbage out. If you sit around gossip for a lot of time, you're going to be defiled by gossip.

If you sit around someone who's constantly perpetrating mental attitude sins, you're going to end up getting defiled. If you are constantly being exposed to some evil and you have some choice about the matter, it's time to separate. It's being defiled by the dead.

Great responsibility was given to priests to exemplify personal purity. You could be dismissed from tabernacle service prominently if you did not follow these rules. There were these domestic restrictions like don't defile yourself for the dead.

Priests didn't go conduct funerals. Today, somebody dies, they've got to find a preacher to do the eulogy and so on because we just figure, well, marrying and burying, that's what pastors do. I used to get calls all the time when my name was in the phone book as a pastor.

Can you marry these people? Can you marry this person? Why should I do that for a total stranger? It's a great thing in certain contexts, but you're not just like a dog catcher. There's a loose dog, call the dog catcher. Somebody died, call the pastor.

There ought to be more to it than that. If a priest even came in contact with a dead body, it was a week of impurity. This is found over in Numbers 19, 11-14.

He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day he will be clean. If he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean.

Whoever touches the dead body of anyone who has died and does not purify himself defiles the tabernacle of the Lord. That person shall be cut off from Israel. He shall be unclean because the water of purification was not sprinkled on him.

His uncleanness is still on him. You know what's interesting about this? You remember the story

of the Lord Jesus? Death, burial, resurrection? When he's in the garden and Mary sees him and she thinks he's the gardener and then she recognizes him, what does he say to her? Touch me not. I've not yet ascended to my Father.

How many days has it been since she and the other women prepared his body with spices? Three days. That day is a day of purification. On the third day, you purify with this water of cleansing.

But it isn't until the seventh day that you can again touch. How long is it from the crucifixion until Jesus holds out his hands to the disciples and says, Feel the marks. It's a week, isn't it? It's a week before Thomas puts his fingers into the holes.

It is not wrong to mourn the death of those who die. John 11.35, Jesus wept. Why? Somebody died.

But mourning ought to be done in a way that glorifies God, not in a way that defiles our priesthood. And people who mourn in the wrong way, who do not reflect their spiritual hope, defile their priesthood. If your mourning defiles your priesthood, it's the wrong kind of mourning.

It should not be something that interrupts spiritual life. People shake their fist at God. How could you let my child die? What kind of an attitude is that? That is mourning that defiles priesthood.

A lot of believers just think God is their personal genie, and if the circumstances of their life don't turn out quite the right way, they're ready to curse God and die. That defiles priesthood. We are supposed to bring dignity and honor to God in all of the things that we do, and that includes times of bereavement.

Family relationships for priests. You have this in verse 7 and 8 of Leviticus 21. They shall not take a wife who is a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband, for the priest is holy to his God.

Now, you know what this tells me? If you weren't a priest, it was okay to marry a woman that was divorced from her husband under the law because this is specifically prohibited for priests, in the same way that there's nothing wrong with having a physical debility or a physical flaw or a scar or a birth defect. Nothing wrong with that. God doesn't preach against it.

It was symbolic that priests were not allowed to have such things. In the same way, there's nothing wrong intrinsically with divorce. The Bible condones it in certain cases, and people ought to get divorced in certain cases.

Jesus said, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives because of the hardness of your heart. The law allowed for divorce, made provision for divorce, because there are hard-hearted people that you need to get separated from. That's the same thing that in Matthew 19, when Jesus

says, the one who divorces, except in the case of pornia, except in the case of fornication, is in trouble.

Well, pornia is the same thing as that hardness of heart. There is a time. A woman who comes home and slaps her husband around, which you'd think that's odd, but it happens.

It's more common that husbands come around and slap their wives around. The woman ought to leave, and if the guy can't get a grip on that, she ought to divorce him, and she ought to take her kids with her, and that's the Word of God. But not a priest.

Why? The priest is holy to his God. He is supposed to reflect the ideal. Ideally, we would not need divorce.

Ideally, there would not be birth defects or accidents that would render someone physically unfit for priesthood. That's the ideal. The priest is a picture of the ideal.

He represents the coming ideal, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who is perfect, without spot, without blemish, who is going to make His church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, holy and without blemish. It's representative. It is not a condemnation if someone finds themselves in one of these categories.

They shall not take a wife who is a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband because the priest is holy to his God. Therefore, you shall consecrate him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for I, the Lord who sanctified you, am holy.

The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. What is the penalty for a daughter of a priest profaning herself outside the bounds of marriage? She shall be burned with fire. Lots of different penalties in the Mosaic Law, but none more severe than this.

Why burned with fire? What does fire represent in Scripture? Judgment with a view toward purification. The refiner's fire removes impurity. The fire of judgment burns away wood, hay, and stubble and leaves behind gold, silver, and precious stones.

She shall be burned with fire. Boy, is that severe. We, likewise, are to be pure in our interpersonal relationships.

It would be easy to make a direct one-to-one analogy and say we should have purity in our marriage. That goes without saying. But with a view toward our priesthood, we need to be very careful about our associations.

A marriage is a voluntary intimacy, a voluntary fellowship with someone else. The priest had to be very discerning in entering into intimate relationship with others, and so should we. We should be discerning about entering into intimate relation of any kind, intimate social

interaction, intimate association of any kind, friendship, even family members.

If they are of a nature to defile and to interfere with our priesthood, they have to be held at arm's length because our priesthood is the most important thing. Priesthood trumps death. Priesthood trumps love.

They say the most powerful things in human life are love and death. Well, priesthood is more important than either one. Anything that interferes or defiles our priesthood has to take second place.

Titus 2, 3, you have the qualifications for elders, but the older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers. How many people, men or women, do you know that when you get around them, if you talk to them for more than about five minutes, end up slandering, and you wind up being party to a conversation that you don't want to be party to, and you wind up hearing things that you didn't want to hear and don't want to know, and you wonder, is this person now going to leave me with intimate details about me to be shared with some other unknown audience elsewhere? Do I want to associate with someone who tells me things I don't want to hear about other people, knowing that they're going to go tell other people things that I don't want heard about me? It defiles our priesthood. Titus 2, 3, and also verse 5. Women should be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands.

Why? That the Word of God may not be blasphemed. What does Leviticus say about the priest? He works with the bread of God. He's got to be pure.

What is the equivalent in our priesthood? What is our holy bread? It's the Word of God. It's the body of Christ. You know, the priests are always saying, the body of Christ, the body of Christ, when they hand people the little wafer.

What is the body of Christ for us? It's the Word. It is the account of the Lord Jesus in the Old Testament and in the New. Jesus pictured His teaching as bread and illustrated it in the feeding of the 5,000 and the feeding of the 4,000 and the level of rejection in each of those cases.

It is the hidden manna. We deal with that. We have to be pure.

The children of priests, what does that compare to with us? What if you're unmarried or don't have kids or whatever? Are you off the hook here? What is the role of a priest to his children? He is an authority. He is an influence. He is looked up to.

He has some realm of oversight. Well, we as people in almost any area of life have someone who looks up to us or who looks at us as an authority or who looks to us for guidance. And we have a responsibility to ensure that the influence we give is good.

Notice if a priest's daughter malfunctioned and played the harlot, the priest himself was not disciplined. The girl was burned. Notice also that it says nothing about the son of the priest,

only the daughter.

Why? Why only the daughter? Remember the umbrella of authority that extends over young women? It belongs to the father until he hands her off to the husband. There is always an accountable male. That daughter, under the roof of her father, that father is accountable for her.

He is responsible for her. And what she does reflects on him. His penalty for her indiscretion, her malfunction, is losing her by fire.

It punishes her and it punishes him. Why not the son? Each man will bear his own sins. If a son of a priest goes off, he has disqualified himself.

He bears his own responsibility. He is held accountable for following the law of Moses. It doesn't reflect on his father the way the daughter does because the daughter is under the umbrella of authority.

There is a difference in the relationship in Israel between daughters to fathers and sons to fathers. Sons are individually accountable. They have a bar mitzvah when they are 12 or 13 years old and they are considered an adult.

And they are held accountable. Not so with daughters. I know they have the bat mitzvah and all that but that's not a biblical concept.

The woman was under the authority of her father until the father handed her to a man who then assumed that responsibility. That's why Paul says, if a woman prays with her head uncovered, she dishonors her head, i.e. her husband. He is accountable.

He is shamed when his wife malfunctions because God looks at him as the accountable person. So, you have an actual case of malfunction on the part of priests who were sons of Aaron just as you had it on the part of Eli. His sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were doing all kinds of evil in 1 Samuel 2. The people lost respect for the priesthood because of their very great sin.

People began to abhor the offering of the Lord because of their disobedience. Their penalty was death. God didn't strike down Eli, did He? God struck down the sons and when Eli heard of it, he fell and broke his neck.

Paul instructed Christian leaders to oversee the behavior of their families, 1 Timothy 3, 4 and 5, one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence. For if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God? Children are to be obedient to their parents. Ephesians 6, Children, obey your parents and the Lord, for this is right.

Honor your father and mother. This is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth. Fathers are to discipline and admonish their

children in a way that does not provoke wrath.

Verse 4 of that same chapter, You fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If discipline does not bring forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, it's not being done correctly. Faulty discipline engenders anger and that means that the angry child has not recognized their own responsibility.

The point about being pure for the function of priesthood is illustrated in all of these different areas of defilement. Priests were not to mix material objects dedicated for worship in the sanctuary. This is, if you move down to chapter 22, verse 2, Speak to Aaron and his sons that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel and that they do not profane my holy name by what they dedicate to me.

I am the Lord. There are certain things that are dedicated to God. There are other things that are dedicated to profane use, to common household use.

Don't bring your silver teapot from home and use it in the service of the Lord. Don't take the holy vessels of the Lord home and use them for your dinner party. Holy things are to be holy.

Secular things are to be secular. Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. Render unto God the things that are God's.

Priests not only had to be ceremonially clean themselves, but they had to maintain a distinction between the holy things of the Lord, the things pertaining to their priesthood. This, I think, has an application as we go about our daily lives, in our job, in our education, in our dealings with the outside world. We don't club people over the head with our faith.

We don't try to hold people to a biblical standard who are not people of the Bible. Our dedication, our priestly ministry, our handling of the things of God is a function of our priesthood, our relationship with God. It's not our place to go try to be somebody else's priest, to try to take the holy things out into the profane world and use them in the profane context.

This has implications in how Christians interact with society, with politics, with industry and business, sports, and so on. There is a time and a place to pray. I don't think it's just beyond the goal line in the middle of a football game.

I personally think that is the mixing of the profane and the holy. I understand the desire for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and others to try to bear some kind of testimony, but it's a goofy testimony. Thank you, God, for giving me a touchdown.

And the guy that just made one five minutes ago at the other end of the field, who is a godless pagan, what is the difference? Touchdowns come from God? It's confusing. You've taken a holy thing, which is the acknowledging of God, a prayer to God, and you've dragged it out into a secular context and you're trying to get people to acknowledge it. It's improper.

Do not mix the holy and the profane. In this chapter, Leviticus 22, it enumerates the different kinds of defiling diseases that a priest might get, leprosy or discharge. If it was temporary, he was off duty until he got over it.

We need to be careful if we acquire the equivalent of a disease in our souls. If we are overwrought, if we are distressed, if the common term that used to be used is out of fellowship, if we're not functioning and hitting on all eight cylinders in our spiritual life, if we are overwhelmed with some problem in our thought life, that is not the time to go try to exercise your spiritual gift. That is not the time to try to go reflect the glory of God when your own soul is in turmoil.

We can contract leprosy. We can become excessively angered. We can become defiled by contact with things in the world, whether it's of our own volition or not.

That's not the time to go rushing in and handle the holy things. There is a period of separation. There is a procedure for cleansing and restoration that has to take place before you resume the function of your priesthood.

And sometimes you have to lay off. The great provision that God makes for us is that those things are always available. We don't have a defined waiting period.

It is exceedingly rare that a Sunday or a Tuesday or a Friday comes along and I've got something in my mind that's so severely upsetting that I can't handle the Word of God properly, that I can't function in my spiritual gift. Why is that? It isn't that I'm not subject to any less than anybody else, but the tools are available. The procedures are there.

And God in His grace seems to space my real difficult times not right before Bible class. There has actually been a time or two when we didn't have class because there was a blue moon out and I was in such a spiritual state of non-preparedness that I couldn't do the class. But it's very rare, and I'm grateful for that.

We are not subject to seven-day limitations or three-day limitations or having to physically walk outside the camp. God's grace to us is immediate. It's available.

And particularly as we grow and mature, it should take a pretty severe blow to knock us so far off balance that we can't quickly recover and quickly be restored to function. But the man of the descendants of Aaron, Leviticus 22.4, leper, discharge, shall not eat the holy offerings until he is clean. Sometimes people think, well, I'm having a big problem.

I need to go hear a good sermon. I need to go get a fresh dose of the Word of God. That's probably the last thing we need.

What we need is to dig into the resources that are already in our soul. This is not the time to try to go concentrate on a sermon or pull out my old notes or something. This is the time to look in my soul.

There is no testing that befalls us but such is common to man. And with the test, God provides the way of escape. You don't get the test unless you've already got the answer.

No teacher, no college course or high school course or any kind of teaching environment gives you a test over material you have not had. You're tested over what you've already covered. So if you have a test, you have been given the answer.

You already know it. It's a matter of finding it, concentrating on it, applying it, making it the object of faith, whatever that is. If we are too messed up to operate properly in our priesthood, that is no time to go try to handle the holy things.

No defiled son of Aaron was to eat the holy offerings until he was clean. Whoever touches anything made unclean by a corpse or a man who has an emission or whoever touches any creeping thing by which he would be made unclean, any person by which he could be made unclean, whatever his uncleanness may be, in verse 5, the person who has touched any such thing shall be unclean until evening and shall not eat the holy offerings unless he washes his body with water. There is a procedure.

Why do we pause at the beginning of Bible class and go before the Lord in prayer? We make sure that we have washed our body with water before we handle the holy things. You just can't go and expect the word of God to do its work when we have not done the work of our own priesthood. Verse 7, when the sun goes down, he shall be clean and afterward he may eat the holy offerings because it is his food.

Verse 8, whatever dies naturally or is torn by beasts, he shall not eat to defile himself with it. I am the Lord. Don't take in food that died of an unknown cause.

You kill and eat your own food. You don't kill what died in some other fashion. This is a reminder of our responsibility as priests to select and to prepare our own food.

You don't just wander around waiting for something to fall from the sky. Oh look, a duck. Let's cook it and eat it.

Well, here's a bull that seems to have been slain by a mountain lion. Let's cook it up and eat it. You don't know its origin.

You didn't slay it. You didn't drain it. You didn't follow the procedures.

This again is talking about intake, sanctification of what you take in. You have to know what you're doing when you accept something and take it in. They shall therefore, verse 9, keep my ordinance, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby if they profane it.

I, the Lord, sanctify them. We ourselves, 1 Corinthians 11, 31 and 32, if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord so that we may not be condemned with the world.

Once again, if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. What if we don't judge ourselves? Then we will be judged. What if we are not chastened by the Lord so that we're not condemned with the world? Then we will be condemned with the world.

It is a possibility for believers. We are to confess and forsake the sins that defile us. If we do not judge our walk before the Lord, James 1.15, the way I memorized it, but when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

These were details of private life, but they had an effect on the priest's public ministry, his profession of priesthood. And in the same way, the details of our private lives cannot be separated from our identity and our function as priests. Well, the Lord told the priests not to defile themselves with unholy things.

We are told in Matthew 7.6, Do not give what is holy to the dogs. Do not cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, turn and tear you to pieces. Which comes from Leviticus 22.

That's the idea. We are also to have discretion in what we sacrifice. We will cover this in more detail when we cover the Levitical offerings in Leviticus 1-6.

But you find the concept in Malachi, for example, chapter 1, verse 7-14, where God charges the priests of Israel. He says, You offer defiled food on my altar. But say, In what way have we defiled you? You've made the table of the Lord contemptible.

You offer the blind as sacrifice. You offer the lame and sick. Is it not evil? Why don't you offer it to your governor and see if he will be pleased with it.

Would he accept you favorably, says the Lord of hosts? I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord of hosts, nor will I accept an offering from your hands. For from the rising of the sun even to its going down, my name shall be great among the Gentiles. In every place, incense shall be offered to my name and a pure offering for my name.

If we can maintain a consciousness of our priesthood and the importance of keeping ourselves qualified and undefiled so that we can operate in our priesthood as well as our ambassadorship and ministry, we will be in that place where God can reflect his glory in us and where incense can go up in his name and a pure offering for his sake. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for picturing for us so vividly the opportunities and the responsibilities that we have as priests before you.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts. May we live in a way that reflects the glory of our Savior, the Lord Jesus. We ask it in his name.

Amen.